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Contact:
Mary Rittle, PR Manager
maryr@nccpa.net
678-417-8142

CERTIFIED PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS PROVIDE VALUE-BASED CARE, PATIENTS BENEFIT

National PA Week Oct. 6–12 Highlights PA Versatility

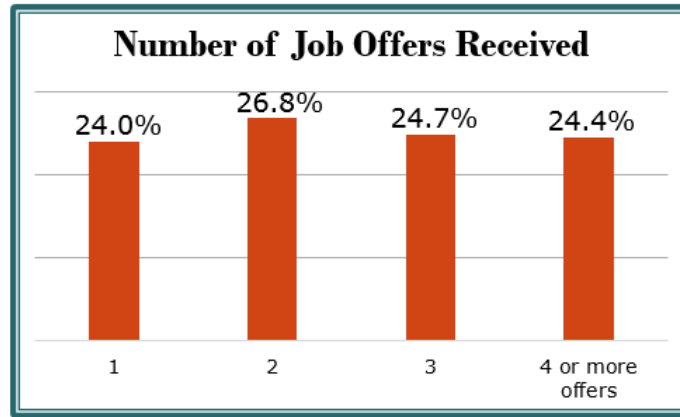
Johns Creek, Ga., Sept. 22, 2015 – Over 102,000 certified physician assistants (PA-Cs) are in the spotlight as the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services focuses on value-based care — achieving the best outcomes at the lowest cost.

“Value-based care is patient-centered care,” says Victoria Kaprielian, M.D., FAAFP, board chair of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). “Patients benefit because the focus is on the betterment of their health. Many studies show that certified PAs have outcomes equal to those of a physician, and PAs reduce the total cost of health care because their average salaries are 40–60 percent of physician salaries depending on the specialty and clinical setting.”

Hospitals and physicians are now paid incentives based on patient engagement and quality outcomes. A 2014 Harris Poll of adult patients conducted on behalf of the American Academy of Physician Assistants concluded that 91 percent of respondents agree PAs improve health outcomes for patients.

“The statistics are impressive, but as someone who has had an opportunity to work with certified PAs and to educate PA students, I have seen firsthand the tremendous value of PAs as members of the health care delivery team, and I encourage all to embrace certified PAs as trusted partners in health care,” adds Kaprielian.

Demand for PAs is growing. In fact, over 75 percent of recently-graduated PAs have multiple job offers, according to the [2014 Statistical Profile of Recently Certified Physician Assistants](#), just released by NCCPA. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says the PA profession will grow 30 percent by 2020, and in 2014 Forbes reported that the best master's degree for jobs was Physician Assistant Studies.



Job offers received by PAs certified in 2014

Certified PAs practice medicine in every specialty and clinical setting, and are often the primary care providers for panels of patients. They provide care for patients with acute problems, chronic diseases and mental illness. Though they collaborate with physicians, PAs may be the sole provider in remote areas where delegated by their employers and allowed by state laws. Even in more populous areas, experienced PAs work autonomously with access to a physician when needed. The top five states with the most certified PAs per 100,000 population are Alaska, South Dakota, Maine, Pennsylvania and New York.

“PAs are certified as generalists and can, therefore, move easily into high demand job areas,” says Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D, PA-C, president and CEO of NCCPA. “They deliver valuable medical services, perform complex procedures, and serve as first assistant to the surgeon in highly technical surgeries. [PAs do that](#) and much more.”

In 2015, NCCPA celebrates 40 years of serving the public by providing a rigorous certification and recertification process.

About the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

The [National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants \(NCCPA\)](#) is the only certifying organization for physician assistants (PAs) in the United States. The PA-C credential is awarded by NCCPA to PAs who fulfill certification, certification maintenance and recertification requirements. NCCPA also administers the [Certificate of Added Qualifications \(CAQ\)](#) program for experienced, certified PAs practicing in seven specialties. For more information, visit <http://www.nccpa.net/>.