

Physician Assistant

Nature of the Profession

Physician assistants (PAs) are licensed health professionals who practice medicine with physician supervision. As part of the physician-PA team, PAs exercise autonomy in diagnosing and treating illnesses.

A PA is able to provide patient care, obtain patient histories, perform physical examinations, diagnose and treat illnesses, care for acute injuries, assist in surgery, and provide follow-up counseling and patient education. PAs practice in virtually every medical specialty from family medicine to orthopedic surgery.

APTITUDES

- Ability to learn scientific concepts, especially in the biological sciences
- Good verbal abilities in reading, writing, and speaking
- Good math skills, space and form perception, and general coordination
- Ability to relate to a variety of people and make decisions based on data and observations

EDUCATION

Programs usually take two years to complete and require that a person already has either two years of college study or a four-year bachelor's degree.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN NEBRASKA

- University of Nebraska Medical Center – Omaha (M)
- Union College – Lincoln (M)

LICENSURE / CERTIFICATION

An applicant for certification as a physician assistant must be at least 19 years of age, graduate from an approved physician assistant program, and pass the proficiency exam.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The American Academy of Physician Assistants

Web Address: www.aapa.org

Nebraska Academy of Physician Assistants

Web Address: www.nebraskapa.org