Physician Associates

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What is a PA?

• A PA is a healthcare professional who is trained to the medical model and who works as part of a medical team to provide holistic medical care.
1961: First proposed in the USA

US 2014 – 110,000 qualified PAs


- Competencies
- Procedural Skills
- Matrix of Conditions

Programme Specification:

~ 3200 hours over 2 yrs
~ 50% clinical
  (incl. 200 simulation hours)
~ 50% theory
What can PAs do?

- Take a medical history
- Examine a patient
- Undertake diagnostic tests/procedures
- Request appropriate tests and investigations*
- Formulate differentials
- Compile a treatment and management plan
- Refer to other teams/discipline as required
- Suggest medications*

- All with physician supervision
Training

- St George’s University of London
- University of Birmingham
- University of Aberdeen
- University of Worcester
- Plymouth and Wolverhampton have courses opening in 2014/2015.
- Many more Universities in consideration/planning stage.
- Entrants must have a First or 2:1 in a science based programme
Training

• At SGUL
• 2 year full-time programme (92 weeks).
  Theoretical & Clinical elements

• Year 1
  Induction period
  80%/20% theoretical/clinical
  Clinical Placements: GP

• Year 2
  Clinical Placements: Primarily hospital based
Training

• Theoretical Elements
  – Foundations in Clinical Medicine
  – Critical Thinking
  – Pharmacology
  – Personal and Professional Development
CPD

• National recertification exam (6 year cycle)
• CPD requirements annually (40 hours) – likely to increase to 50 hours from next year.
Key attributes of qualified PAs

- Stability/continuity
- Flexibility
- Communication amongst different members of the MDT
- Accessibility
- Awareness of the limits of their competence
- Team players
- Lifelong learners
PA Map
• **Generalist Specialties:**
  • Educators
  • Emergency Medicine
  • General Practice
• **Adult Medical Specialties:**
  • Cardiology
  • Care of the Elderly / Geriatrics
  • Dermatology
  • Endocrinology
  • Gastroenterology
  • General Internal Medicine
  • Genitourinary Medicine / Sexual Health
  • Haematology
  • Infectious Diseases
  • Lymphoedema
  • Psychiatry
  • Rehabilitation Medicine
  • Respiratory Medicine
• **Paediatric Specialties:**
  • Critical Care
  • General Paediatrics
  • **Surgical Specialties:**
  • Breast surgery
  • Colorectal Surgery
  • Neurosurgery
  • Orthopaedic Surgery
  • Otolaryngology
  • Paediatric Surgery
  • Spinal Surgery
  • Trauma and Orthopaedics
  • Urology
  • Vascular Surgery
Current limitations

• A registered, but not currently a regulated profession.
• Unable to prescribe or order ionising radiation.
• Perceived competition by junior doctors, especially for procedures.
• Demand outstripping supply.
Recent progress

- UKAPA Census (2012).
- Name Change (2013).
- The Push for Regulation (ongoing!) GMC v HPC.
- Faculty of PAs within the RCP.
• UK CONSULTANTS NEED PAS THEY JUST DON’T REALISE IT YET"........US CONSULTANT (AAPA CONFERENCE, 2008)
With thanks to and apologies from Teresa Dowsing, UKAPA President.

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Recent publications


• Physician Associates and the future development of geriatric medicine services. N Powell, B Mearns, R Forbes-Pyman & S Payne. BGS newsletter

• Satisfaction of doctors with the role of physician associates. L Williams & T Ritsema. Clinical Medicine. June 2014 (3)

• http://www.nhsimas.nhs.uk/fileadmin/Files/Big_Splash/Big_Splash_Issue32__3_.pdf Michael Wilson