

Physician Assistants

WHAT THEY DO

Provides patient services under the direct supervision and responsibility of physicians. Directly assists doctors as needed. Belongs to the Health Science cluster and Therapeutic Services pathway.

IS THIS FOR YOU?

Work Interests are described in the following categories (compatible with Holland's Model) by people who tend to succeed in this career:

- **Investigative** – You are a "thinker". When you have a problem, you like to analyze it and look at different ways to solve it. You like to work by yourself, and you don't like explaining your ideas to other people.
- **Social** – You are a "helper". You like being around people and helping them with problems. Socializing is fun for you.
- **Realistic** – You are a "doer". You like physical activities and projects. You like to find the answers to problems by doing hands-on work instead of talking about solutions.

Work Values are aspects of work that are satisfying to you. The following work values are generally associated with this career.

- **Independence** – It's very important to you that your work allows you to make decisions on your own. You want to try out your own ideas and work with little supervision.
- **Achievement**—It's very important to you that your work allows you to use your best abilities. You want to see the results of your work and get a feeling of accomplishment.
- **Support**—It's very important to you to know the company stands behind its workers and has competent, considerate and fair management.
- **Working Conditions**—It's very important to you that your work satisfies your needs in areas like salary, job security and your working style preferences, such as working alone, staying busy all the time or having variety in your work tasks.
- **Recognition** – It's very important to you that your work satisfies your need for prestige and leadership opportunities, as well as opportunities for advancement.
- **Relationships** – It's very important to you that you have friendly co-workers. You would like to be of service to others without compromising your sense of right and wrong.

Aptitudes reflect a person's ability to acquire skills and knowledge. The following aptitudes are important for success in the career:

- **General Learning Ability**
- **Verbal Aptitude**



SKILLS YOU NEED

Basic Skills:

- Reading Comprehension
- Active Listening
- Writing
- Speaking
- Mathematics
- Science
- Critical Thinking
- Active Learning
- Learning Strategies
- Monitoring

Transferable Skills (applicable in other careers): High level

- Developing and using computerized medical records
- Giving injections, drugs, and other medications
- Helping people understand health care instructions
- Observing and analyzing physical problems
- Planning health care treatments
- Treating physical or mental problems
- Working as a member of a health services team

Workplace Skills:

Medium level

- Complex Problem Solving
- Coordination
- Instructing
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Persuasion
- Service Orientation
- Social Perceptiveness
- Systems Analysis
- Systems Evaluation
- Time Management

Additional skills for this occupation may be found at <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/career-exploration-resources>

Source: <https://secure.ihaveaplaniowa.gov/>

ESTIMATED & PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT

Occupational Title	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	2012-22 Employment Change	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Total Annual Openings
Total, All Occupations	1,758,205	1,955,480	197,275	1.1	61,665
Total Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	84,995	100,885	15,890	1.9	3,345
Physician Assistants	725	955	230	3.2	35

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>

2015 WAGE & SALARY (\$)

Occupational Title	Average Wage	Average Salary	Entry Wage	Entry Salary	Experienced Wage	Experienced Salary
Total, All Occupations	19.77	41,122	9.55	19,858	24.88	51,755
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	32.07	66,705	16.54	34,407	39.83	82,853
Physician Assistants	44.23	92,003	31.46	65,438	50.62	105,286

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Education	Work Experience	Job Training
Master's Degree	None	None

All states require that physician assistants complete an accredited, formal education program and pass a national exam to obtain a license. Physician assistant programs usually last at least two years and are full time. In 2010, 154 education programs for physician assistants were accredited or provisionally accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on the Education of Physician Assistants. 142 of these programs offer the option of a master's degree, and the rest offer either a bachelor's degree or an associate degree. Most applicants to PA educational programs already have a bachelor's degree. All States and the District of Columbia have legislation governing the qualifications or practice of physician assistants. All jurisdictions require physician assistants to pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination, administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and open only to graduates of accredited PA education programs. Only those successfully completing the examination may use the credential 'Physician Assistant-Certified.' To remain certified, PAs must complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every 2 years. Every 6 years, they must pass a recertification exam. [The Iowa Board of Physician Assistant Examiners website at http://access.bridges.com/ext/cp/custom_state_data/iowa_licensed_occupations/29-1071.htm](http://access.bridges.com/ext/cp/custom_state_data/iowa_licensed_occupations/29-1071.htm) provides specific licensure and support information for the state of Iowa.

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0> and <https://secure.ihaveaplaniowa.gov/>

NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE (NCRC)

Skill	Median Skill Level
Applied Mathematics	n. a.
Locating Information	n. a.
Reading for Information	n. a.

This ACT-developed credential demonstrates achievement and a certain level of workplace employability skills. The greater the score, the greater the skill level (Bronze = 3, Silver = 4, Gold = 5, Platinum = 6).

Source: <http://www.act.org/workkeys/analysis/occup.html>

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

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PRIMARY INDUSTRY SECTORS

(Where are Physician Assistants Employed?)
 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
 Ambulatory Health Care Services
 Hospitals

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>