

COMPARISON OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS

CATEGORY	PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT	NURSE PRACTITIONER
<u>Definition</u>	Health care professionals licensed to practice medical care with physician supervision.	Registered nurses with advanced education and training in a clinical specialty who can perform delegated medical acts with physician supervision.
<u>Philosophy/Model</u>	Medical/physician model , disease centered, with emphasis on the biological/pathologic aspects of health, assessment, diagnosis, treatment. Practice model is a team approach relationship with physicians.	Medical/Nursing model , Biopsychosocial centered, with emphasis on disease adaptation, health promotion, wellness, and prevention. Practice model is a collaborative relationship with physicians.
<u>Education</u>	Affiliated with Medical schools Previous health care experience required; most programs require B.S. and confer Masters degree. Program curriculum is advanced science based. Approx. 1000 didactic and over 2000 clinical hours . All PAs are trained as generalists in the primary care model and some receive post-graduate specialty training. Procedure and skill oriented with emphasis on diagnosis, treatment, surgical skills, and patient education.	Affiliated with Nursing schools BSN is prerequisite; curriculum is bio-psychosocial based, based upon behavioral, natural, and humanistic sciences. NPs choose a specialty-training track in adult, acute care, pediatric, women's health or gerontology. Approx. 500 didactic hours and 500-700 clinical hours . Emphasis on patient education, diagnosis, treatment and prevention. Generally not trained for surgical settings. Master's conferred.
<u>Certification/Licensure</u>	Separate but single accreditation and certification bodies require successful completion of an accredited program and NCCPA national certification exam. NCCPA certification is the gold standard and is required to obtain a PA license in Wisconsin. (Chapter Med 8)	Nursing accreditation and multiple nursing certification agencies. Master's Degree required to sit for exam; national certification is voluntary . An optional certificate (APNP) and a written collaborative agreement with a physician are required for prescribing. (Chapter N 8)
<u>Recertification</u>	Recertification requires 100 hours of CME every 2 years and exam every 6 years. Recertification is comparable to family physicians. All PAs are licensed by their State Medical Board and the Medical Practice Act provisions.	Recertification requires 1500 direct patient contact hours and 75 CEUs every 5-6 years. No exam is required. NP's practice under their basic RN license under the Nurse Practice Act
<u>Scope of Practice</u>	The supervising physician has relatively broad discretion in delegating medical tasks within his/her scope of practice to the PA in accordance with state regulations. Written guidelines are required for prescriptions. Does not require on-site supervision Chapter Med 8 in WI Administrative Code	Nursing care is provided as an independent function. However, protocols or written or verbal orders are required for delegated medical acts - such acts require general MD supervision. Sec. N6.03(2), WI Administrative Code
<u>Third Party Coverage and Reimbursement</u>	PAs are eligible for certification as Medicaid and Medicare providers, and generally receive favorable reimbursement from commercial payers.	NP's are eligible for certification as Medicaid and Medicare providers, and generally receive favorable reimbursement from commercial payers.
<u>References</u>	http://academic.son.wisc.edu/wistrec www.wapa.org , www.aapa.org	http://www.nursingworld.org/ WI Regulatory Digest , www.nonpf.com www.wisconsinnurses.org