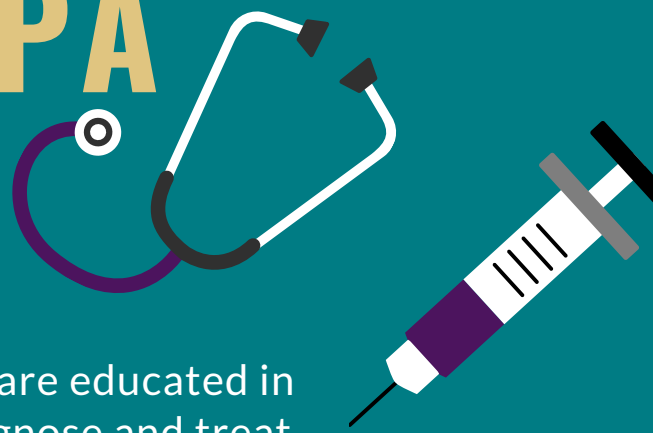


HOW DO I BECOME A CERTIFIED PA (PA-C)?



Certified PAs are health care providers who are educated in the medical model. They are educated to diagnose and treat illnesses and provide preventative care in collaboration with a physician.

Interested in becoming a Certified PA? Follow these steps:



1 RESEARCH PA PROGRAMS

Even before entering undergrad, it is a good idea to research PA programs to get a sense of the prerequisite courses that you'll need to take prior to applying to PA school.

2 OBTAIN A BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Before applying to PA school you'll need to complete a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. You should strongly consider a science-related major, and take any prerequisite courses necessary for PA school.



3 GET HCE/PCE EXPERIENCE

After graduation, you'll need to obtain at least 1,000 hours of health care experience (HCE) or patient care experience (PCE). Health care experience is work in which you are not directly responsible for a patient's care, while patient care experience is when you are directly responsible for a patient's care. If you'd like to satisfy this requirement sooner, you may seek out opportunities to complete HCE/PCE hours during your undergraduate studies.



4 APPLY TO PA SCHOOL

Once you've graduated and have obtained enough HCE/PCE, it's time to apply to PA school. Many students apply to PA programs through the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). As part of the application process, you'll need to be prepared to share your college transcripts, letters of recommendation, and evidence of HCE/PCE. Many PA programs will also require a candidate interview, so be sure to research tips, and prepare by participating in mock interviews before the big day.



5 COMPLETE PA SCHOOL

PA school typically ranges between 23-27 months. During this time you'll want to remain focused and study hard and often. Prior to graduating, you'll need to complete at least 2,000 hours of structured clinical education.



6 PANCE

After completing PA school, and before applying for licensure in your state, you'll need to complete and pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). Once you pass, you can apply for jobs and begin practicing as a Certified PA!

