

**COMPARISON OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS**

| <b>CATEGORY</b>                                      | <b>PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT</b>   | <b>NURSE PRACTITIONER</b>   |
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| <b><u>Definition</u></b>                             | 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.   |
| <b><u>Philosophy/Model</u></b>                       | <b>Medical/physician model</b> , disease centered, with emphasis on the biological/pathologic aspects of health, assessment, diagnosis, treatment. <b>Practice model is a team approach relationship with physicians.</b>  | <b>Medical/Nursing model</b> , Biopsychosocial centered, with emphasis on disease adaptation, health promotion, wellness, and prevention. <b>Practice model is a collaborative relationship with physicians.</b>  |
| <b><u>Education</u></b>                              | Affiliated with <b>Medical schools</b><br>Previous health care experience required; Many have entry-level bachelors degree. Program curriculum is advanced science based. Approx. 1000 didactic and <b>over 2000 clinical hours</b> . All PAs are trained as generalists- a primary care model and some receive post-graduate specialty training. Procedure and skill oriented with emphasis on diagnosis, treatment, surgical skills, and patient education.<br>~50% of programs award Masters degrees and all are currently transitioning to the master's level. | Affiliated with <b>Nursing schools</b><br>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 <b>500-700 clinical hours</b> .<br>Emphasis on patient education, diagnosis, treatment and prevention. Generally not trained for surgical settings.<br>Master's prepared |
| <b><u>Certification/Licensure</u></b>                | Separate accreditation and certification bodies <b>require</b> successful completion of an accredited program and NCCPA national certification exam. NCCPA certification is the gold standard.   | Nursing accreditation and multiple nursing certification agencies.<br>Master's Degree required to sit for exam; national certification is <b>voluntary</b> and utilized for advanced nurse prescribers within their specialty training.   |
| <b><u>Recertification</u></b>                        | <b>Recertification requires 100 hours of CME every 2 years and exam every 6 years. Recertification is comparable to family physicians.</b> All PAs are licensed by their State Medical Board and the Medical Practice Act provisions.  | <b>Recertification requires 1500 direct patient contact hours and 75 CEUs every 5-6 years. No exam is required.</b> NP's practice under their basic RN license under the Nurse Practice Act.  |
| <b><u>Scope of Practice</u></b>                      | 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 *<br><b>Chapter Med 8 in WI Administrative Code</b>   | Nursing care is provided as an independent function; however, protocols and written or verbal orders are required for delegated medical acts including prescriptions - such acts require general MD supervision. <b>*sec. N6.03(2), WI Administrative Code</b>  |
| <b><u>Third Party Coverage and Reimbursement</u></b> | 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.   |
| <b><u>References</u></b>                             | <a href="http://academic.son.wisc.edu/wistrec">http://academic.son.wisc.edu/wistrec</a><br><a href="http://www.wapa.org">www.wapa.org</a> , <a href="http://www.aapa.org">www.aapa.org</a>   | <a href="http://www.ana.org">www.ana.org</a> , <i>WI Regulatory Digest</i> ,<br><a href="http://www.nonpf.org">www.nonpf.org</a>  |