

# California Physician Assistant Programs: What's next?

*Rosslynn S. Byous, DPA, PAC*

Commissioner

California Healthcare Workforce Policy Commission  
Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development  
(OSHPD)

# What will I cover?

- Accreditation
- Number of programs
- Number of graduates
- Number of Licensed physician Assistants
- Future trends

# ARC-PA

*“The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant is the accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public and physician assistant profession by defining the standards for physician assistant education and evaluating physician assistant educational programs within the territorial United States to ensure their compliance with those standards.”*

([www.arc-pa.org](http://www.arc-pa.org), accessed 11/2/2011)

# Mission – ARC-PA

The ARC-PA is the recognized accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public, including current and prospective PA students, and the PA profession by defining the standards for PA education and evaluating PA educational programs within the territorial United States to ensure their compliance with those standards.

# ARC-PA

- Independent body
- Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and

# Types of Accreditation

1. Provisional Accreditation
2. Continued Accreditation
3. Initial Accreditation for Clinical Postgraduate Programs
4. Probationary Accreditation
5. Administrative Probationary Accreditation
6. Accreditation Withheld
7. Accreditation Withdrawn

# ARC-PA

Who is involved:

- The American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Physician Assistants,
- American College of Physicians
- American College of Surgeons
- American Medical Association
- Physician Assistant Education Association (formerly the Association of Physician Assistant Programs)

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# Standards

- Guidelines for all programs to follow
- Revised on a regular basis
- Comments are welcomed from PA educators, professional organizations, and other stakeholders.

# Terms we live by -

- Review cycle
  - Varies between 2-7 years
- Terminology
  - **Must** – mandatory
  - **Should** – the reason why it does not exist must be very compelling

# Revised Standards: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

- Effective September 1, 2010
  - A single entity must be the sponsor of the program
  - “Programs accredited prior to 2013 that do not currently offer a graduate degree must transition to conferring a graduate degree, which should be awarded by the sponsoring institution upon all PA students who matriculate into the program after 2020.”

# Total number of Accredited Programs

## Nationally and other information

- There are currently 159 accredited programs in the United States (40+ in the pipeline for provisional)
- The average length is 24-28 months
- Average cost is approximately \$60-\$75k for two years
- Enrollments range from 20 to 100 per class
- Applicants apply through CASPA
  - Some programs require direct applications
  - Most require a supplemental application
  - Interviews are a part of the admissions process

# There are 9 Accredited PA Programs

- Northern California
  - **UC Davis**
  - Samuel Merritt
  - Touro University
  - **Foothill Community College Affiliated with Stanford**
- Southern California
  - **San Joaquin Valley**
  - USC
  - Western University
  - Loma Linda
  - **Riverside Community College Total enrolled**

# Things to ponder....

- Charles Drew University
  - Withdrew accreditation March 2010 (last class 8/10/11)
    - 2015
- Southern California College of Optometry (new)
  - 2014
- Next cycle for programs wanting to enter the provisional accreditation process is **September 2015.**
  - **Two review cycles March and September**

# Physician Assistant Committee (PAC)

*The mission of the Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical Board of California is to protect and serve the consumers through licensing, education and objective enforcement of the Physician laws and regulations.*

# PA Licensees

- Consumer Affairs
- Medical Board
  - Main function is consumer protection
- Must graduate from an ARC-PA Accredited program
- Must pass the PANCE (initial licensing)
- Must log 50 hours category I CME every two years (continued licensing)
- Total number of Physician Assistants Licensed to practice in California 8,213 active licensees
  - *New licenses – averages 600 per year*

# SWOT Analysis:

- **Strengths**

- 9 Programs have successfully graduated PAs into the California workforce
- Support of CAPA
- PAEA is the professional educational arm that supports PA programs
- PAC has the authority to approve PA programs and is very supportive of PA programs

- **Weaknesses**

- Clinical rotations for the mandated ARC-PA disciplines may not be sufficient enough to accommodate program growth or to handle new programs (e.g., mental health, women's health, pediatrics, emergency medicine, general surgery, etc.)

# SWOT continued:

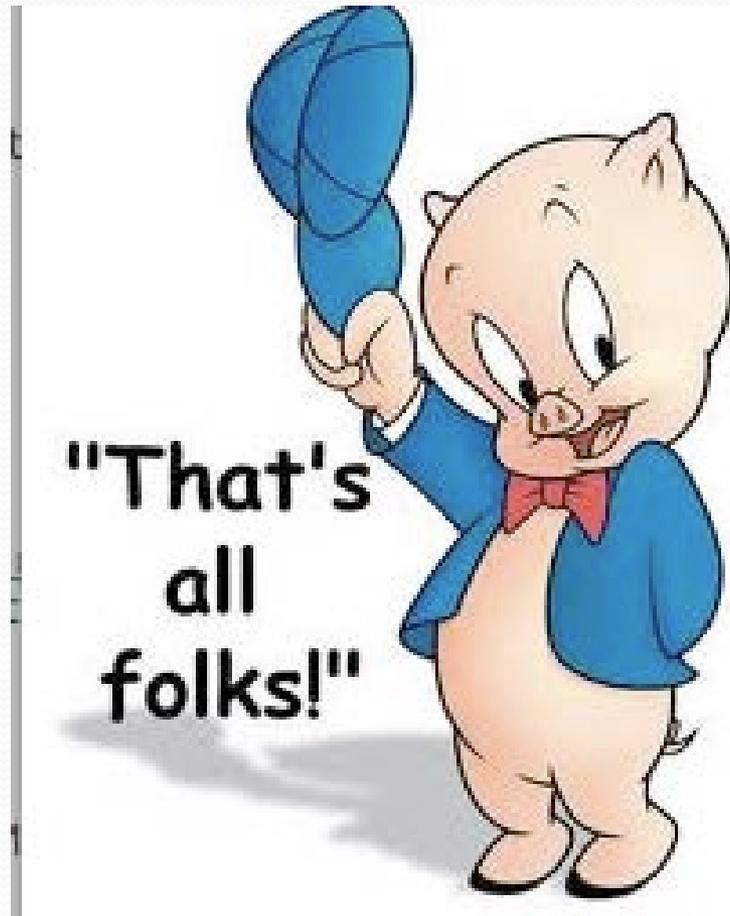
- **Opportunities**

- To foster collaborative educational experiences
- Health Care Reform – What will Obama Care mean for PA programs?

- **Threats**

- Administration would like to increase class sizes
- Faculty – do we have enough doctorally prepared faculty to fill the gap
- Must for surgery, women's health, psychiatry, emergency medicine
- 2020 mandate to transition to a master's level
  - Diversity – Song-Brown wants diversity a graduate degree is counter to this goal
- Affects 4 of 9 programs in California
  - How will they meet the mandate?

# Questions or comments



# References and resources

- Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)
  - <http://www.arc-pa.org/about/index.html>
- Physician Assistant Committee (PAC)
  - [www.pac.ca.gov](http://www.pac.ca.gov)
- California Academy of Physician Assistants (CAPA)
  - <http://www.capanet.org/>
- Physician Education Association (PAEA)
  - <http://www.paeaonline.org/>
- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
  - <http://www.aapa.org/>
- National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
  - <http://www.nccpa.net/>