

Title VII Support for Physician Assistant (PA) Education Results in Positive Outcomes for Primary Care

GAO Report Confirms Investments in PA Education Improve the Primary Care Workforce

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Key Points of the GAO Report:

- "HRSA projected a **shortage of up to 23,650 primary care physicians by 2025**—although it indicated that changes in health care delivery, such as greater use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants, could affect the extent of that shortage."^{1(p35)}
- "Particularly with regard to primary care, experts have also suggested that some health care needs may be filled through the **greater use of other types of providers** such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants."^{1(p13)}
- "Expansion of Physician Assistant Training Graduates...were more likely than 2013 graduates of the two nurse practitioner programs to be practicing in primary care or rural or medically underserved areas one year



Courtesy of Shenandoah University

- after graduating."^{1(p42)}
- "Of 22 Expansion of Physician Assistant Training grantees responding to a survey, 82% planned on maintaining all expanded positions."^{1(p43)}

On June 26, 2017, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report on health care education and workforce training issues. Although the report was predominantly focused on physician workforce viability, the agency's findings offer strong support for the role of Title VII programs such as Expansion of Physician Assistant Training grants in increasing the capacity of PA education programs, expanding the number of PAs serving in rural or medically underserved areas following graduation, and alleviating both current and future shortages of primary care providers across the United States. The report's conclusions offer compelling support for expanded funding for PA education programs under Title VII with a track record of success in improving access to primary care for patients.

For questions about the GAO's report or Title VII programs, please contact advocacy@PAEAonline.org.

REFERENCE

¹ Government Accountability Office, Physician Workforce: Locations and Types of Graduate Training Were Largely Unchanged, and Federal Efforts May Not Be Sufficient to Meet Needs, May 2017. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/684945.pdf>. Accessed June 27, 2017.

