

Specialty Update

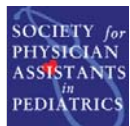
FOCUS ON PA SPECIALTY ORGANIZATIONS

PAs in pediatrics emphasize patient education and advocacy and recognize the social and environmental factors that shape children's health. PAs work in pediatrics in both inpatient and outpatient settings. The American Academy of Pediatrics, in a report on the role of midlevel providers in the care of hospitalized children, concluded that PAs "have a meaningful role in the management of hospitalized children" and "can play a valuable role in the care of hospitalized children by contributing special skills that improve the quality of patient care."

▶ **Numerous studies** have found that PAs in pediatric outpatient settings increase productivity and decrease physician stress by handling routine pediatric complaints and helping patients and their parents understand their illnesses and treatment options.

▶ **AAPA supports** the objectives of Healthy People 2010. Pediatric-specific goals include increase the proportion of children who have a specific source of ongoing care, reduce or eliminate indigenous cases of vaccine-preventable diseases, and increase the proportion of young children and adolescents who receive all vaccines that have been recommended for universal administration for at least 5 years.

Society for PAs in Pediatrics (SPAP)



SPAP works to provide PAs who care for children with valuable resources related to the care of pediatric patients, including those affected by our presidential initiative for this year, childhood obesity. SPAP also helps PAs who care for pediatric patients to stay current on breaking news in the pediatric world. New and changing immunization guidelines, autism, and newborn hearing screening are just a few of the medical issues facing PAs who are involved in caring for children.

▶ **Members receive** a subscription discount to the clinical magazine *Contemporary Pediatrics*. Members also receive *PediPoints*, a journal review of breaking pediatric news.

▶ **Our Web site**, www.aapacom.org/spap, includes a listing of links to pediatric-specific Web sites, updates on SPAP news and events, and information on CME opportunities. The members-only section includes job listings, a complete SPAP membership directory, *PediPoints*, a student page, and more.

▶ **SPAP's CME conference** is held in conjunction with the Association of Family Practice Physician Assistants' annual meeting. All PAs who work and have an interest in pediatrics can attend sessions on pediatric-specific topics. Our next CME conference will be held in San Diego, California, on October 31-November 1.

PAs in gastroenterology treat patients with a wide variety of gastroenterologic illnesses, including gastroesophageal reflux disease, esophageal dysmotility, esophageal cancer, gastroduodenal ulcer disease, celiac disease, gallbladder disease, and various other ailments. Many patients with chronic illnesses see PAs regularly for their treatment.

▶ **Diagnostic and therapeutic** procedures performed by PAs who work with gastroenterologists include flexible sigmoidoscopies, paracentesis, biopsies, and assisting with PEG (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy) tube placement.

▶ **PAs who complete** the Advanced Trauma Life Support course offered by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) will receive provider cards starting in October 2008. This is a result of the efforts of Dan Vetrosky, PA-C, MEd, AAPA liaison to ACS, as well as some of his predecessors. Currently, PAs who complete the course receive a letter indicating that they attended the course.

▶ **Physician assistants** often play a key role in providing education, support, and encouragement to help patients with chronic illnesses that require difficult treatment regimens.

▶ **AAPA joins** other national organizations in endorsing the Public Health Service-sponsored smoking cessation guidelines, *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update*. Many patients receive their health care from specialty providers and PAs in gastroenterology are well suited to help patients learn about tobacco cessation interventions.

Gastroenterology Physician Assistants (GIPA)



GIPA continues to explore new ways to address the needs of our members. In order to improve communications and better organize activities for members, our membership year was recently changed from an anniversary cycle to a uniform cycle. Several GIPA board members are involved in the ongoing discussions regarding specialty certification and testing.

▶ **Our board of directors** is available to share its experience in GI patient care with GIPA members. GIPA's membership directory is a helpful resource for networking with other PAs who practice in this specialty.

▶ **Members receive** reimbursement for their American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases membership dues. This benefit is part of our efforts to support the professional development of PAs in gastroenterology.

▶ **GIPA takes pride** in our members' clinical knowledge and the quality of care they provide to their patients. We are currently developing our own national CME conference for PAs in gastroenterology, tentatively planned for early 2009.