

*2015*  
**Statistical  
Profile  
of  
Recently  
Certified  
Physician  
Assistants**



an Annual Report of the  
National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

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# Message from the President and CEO

*Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D, PA-C*

Dear Colleagues:

It has never been a better time to enter the PA profession. The healthcare industry is experiencing dramatic growth marked by an ever increasing demand for services. At the same time, the industry is being asked to be more transparent and provide metrics that show that patients are satisfied and have quality care.

Certified PAs meet these challenges with clear proof points, entering the profession after completing an average of 2000 clinical hours and then passing the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam. In addition, they are committed to lifelong learning as they maintain certification by completing extensive CME and by passing rigorous recertification exams throughout their careers.

This report clearly shows that physicians and employers welcome Certified PAs into their workplaces, as shown by the number of job offers received.

We are proud to have these recently Certified PAs join the profession and know that those who employ them will value them as members of high-performing healthcare teams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Morton-Rias". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dawn-Morton Rias, Ed.D, PA-C

# About the Data and Collection Methodology

## *Introduction*

Since certifying the first physician assistants (PAs) in 1975, NCCPA has collected data on the PA profession as PAs completed various processes related to obtaining initial certification and then maintaining certification by earning and logging continuing medical education credits and passing recertification examinations. In May 2012, NCCPA's data gathering efforts were significantly enhanced with the launch of the PA Professional Profile. This data gathering instrument is presented to PAs through a secure portal within NCCPA's website. The Profile was launched with two modules: "About Me" and "My Practice."

In December 2012, NCCPA added a "Recently Certified" module delivered online to PAs who have been certified (for the first time) for less than six months. This report highlights the data collected from this module.

## *Data Editing and Analysis*

Data reflected in this report includes responses from PAs who were certified for the first time in 2015. The participants included in this report answered at least a portion of the survey between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. In addition, some data was obtained from other NCCPA data collection strategies (as noted within the report). As of December 31, 2015, there were 6,048 recently certified PAs who provided responses out of the 7,776 recently certified PAs with access to the module (77.8% response rate).

The data provided in this report has been aggregated from the individual responses provided by PAs through the PA Professional Profile or other NCCPA data gathering efforts. Responses were examined for consistency and potential errors. In cases of obvious error or inconclusive data, the responses were not included in the analysis. The number of responses to individual items varies due to differing response rates or due to the data being removed for reasons previously noted. Analyses of the data consist primarily of descriptive statistics.

## *About NCCPA*

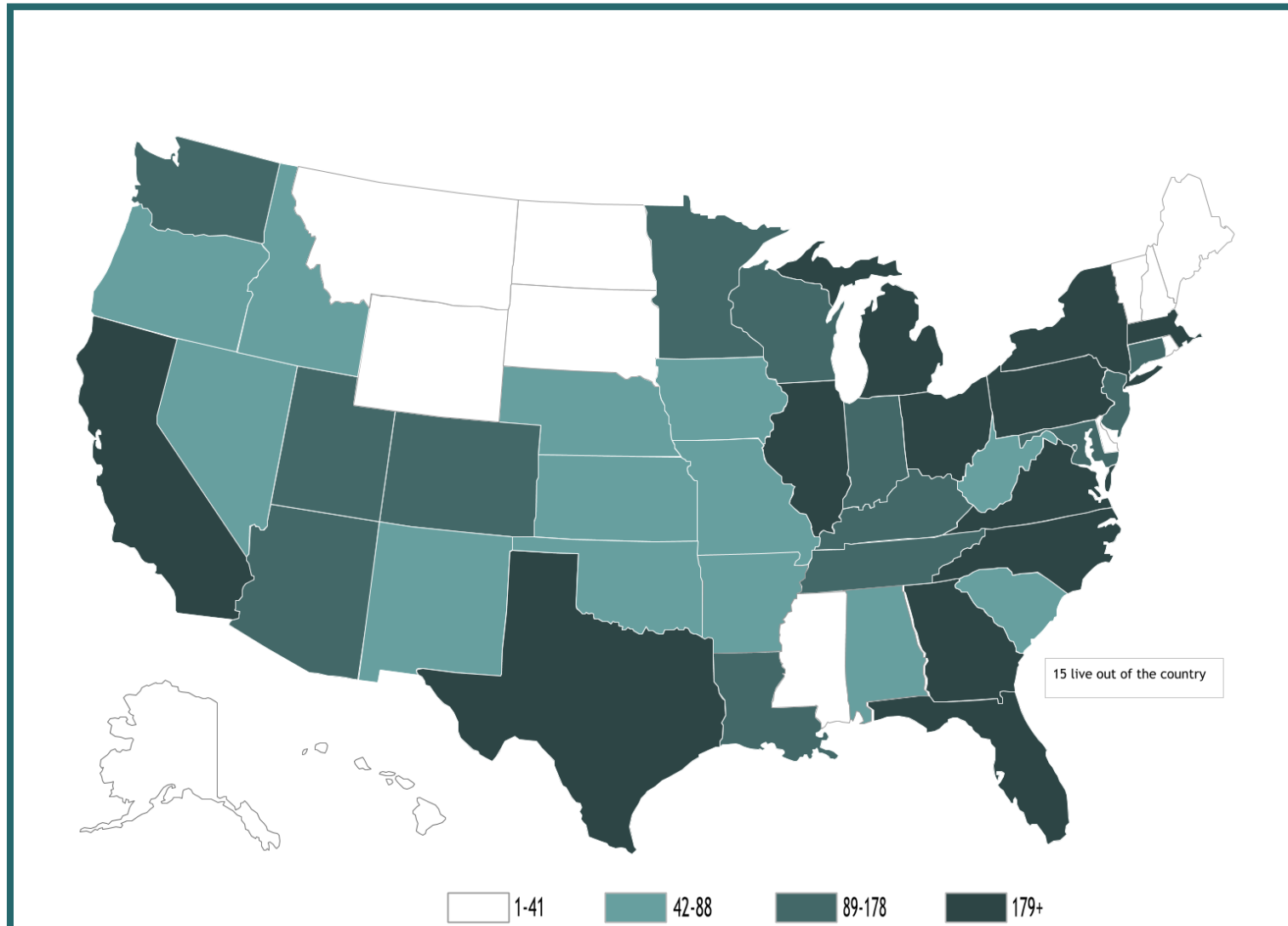
NCCPA is the only certifying organization for physician assistants in the United States. Established as a not-for-profit organization in 1974, NCCPA is dedicated to assuring the public that certified PAs meet established standards of clinical knowledge and cognitive skills upon entry into practice and throughout their careers. All U.S. states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories have decided to rely on NCCPA certification as one of the criteria for licensure or regulation of PAs. More than 130,000 PAs have been certified by NCCPA since 1975, and approximately 108,000 were certified at the end of 2015.

For more information about NCCPA, visit our website: [www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net).

## Distribution of Recently Certified PAs

Number of recently certified PAs by state (divided by quartiles); Number, percentage of recently certified PAs by state

Figure 1: Distribution of Recently Certified PAs by State (Divided by Quartiles)



### Noteworthy:

There were 7,776 recently certified PAs who had access to the PA Professional Profile in 2015. The map illustrates the distribution of those PAs.

Note: Figure 1 highlights the states with the greatest numbers of recently certified PAs based on state of residence as reported to NCCPA.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) expects that the number of PA educational programs will grow from 210 (May 2016) to 260 by July 1, 2020, which would have an impact on the number of PAs seeking NCCPA certification.

**Table 1: Recently Certified PAs by State (Number, Percent of Total, and Rank)**

State	Number	Percent of Total (Rank)
Alabama	83	1.1% (29)
Alaska	30	0.4% (42)
Arizona	173	2.2% (16)
Arkansas	44	0.6% (37)
California	491	6.3% (4)
Colorado	139	1.8% (21)
Connecticut	151	1.9% (19)
Delaware	21	0.3% (46)
D.C.	17	0.2% (48)
Florida	524	6.7% (3)
Georgia	208	2.7% (12)
Hawaii	8	0.1% (50)
Idaho	68	0.9% (31)
Illinois	240	3.1% (9)

State	Number	Percent of Total (Rank)
Indiana	124	1.6% (22)
Iowa	66	0.8% (32)
Kansas	50	0.6% (34)
Kentucky	95	1.2% (25)
Louisiana	106	1.4% (23)
Maine	31	0.4% (40)
Maryland	156	2.0% (18)
Massachusetts	228	2.9% (10)
Michigan	306	3.9% (7)
Minnesota	175	2.3% (15)
Mississippi	24	0.3% (44)
Missouri	77	1.0% (30)
Montana	31	0.4% (41)
Nebraska	54	0.7% (33)

**Noteworthy:**

Recently certified PAs were represented in all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

The states with the greatest number of recently certified PAs include: New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, California and Texas. These five states are also the top five most populous for all certified PAs.

**Table 1: Recently Certified PAs by State (Number, Percent, Rate and Rank), *continued***

State	Number	Percent of Total (Rank)
Nevada	46	0.6% (36)
New Hampshire	41	0.5% (39)
New Jersey	177	2.3% (14)
New Mexico	43	0.6% (38)
New York	801	10.3% (1)
North Carolina	379	4.9% (6)
North Dakota	13	0.2% (49)
Ohio	303	3.9% (8)
Oklahoma	85	1.1% (28)
Oregon	86	1.1% (27)
Pennsylvania	565	7.3% (2)
Rhode Island	24	0.3% (45)
South Carolina	88	1.1% (26)
South Dakota	28	0.4% (43)

State	Number	Percent of Total (Rank)
Tennessee	178	2.3% (13)
Texas	474	6.1% (5)
Utah	100	1.3% (24)
Vermont	21	0.3% (47)
Virginia	223	2.9% (11)
Washington	144	1.9% (20)
West Virginia	48	0.6% (35)
Wisconsin	167	2.1% (17)
Wyoming	7	0.1% (51)
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Note: PAs that reported an address in the U.S. Additionally, 15 recently certified PAs were living abroad.



## Gender and Age of Recently Certified Physician Assistants

Distribution of recently certified PAs by age and gender; Number by gender; Number by age group

### Noteworthy:

The median age of recently certified PAs was 27 in 2015.

Overall, 67.2% of certified PAs are female.

Figure 2: Distribution of Recently Certified PAs by Age and Gender

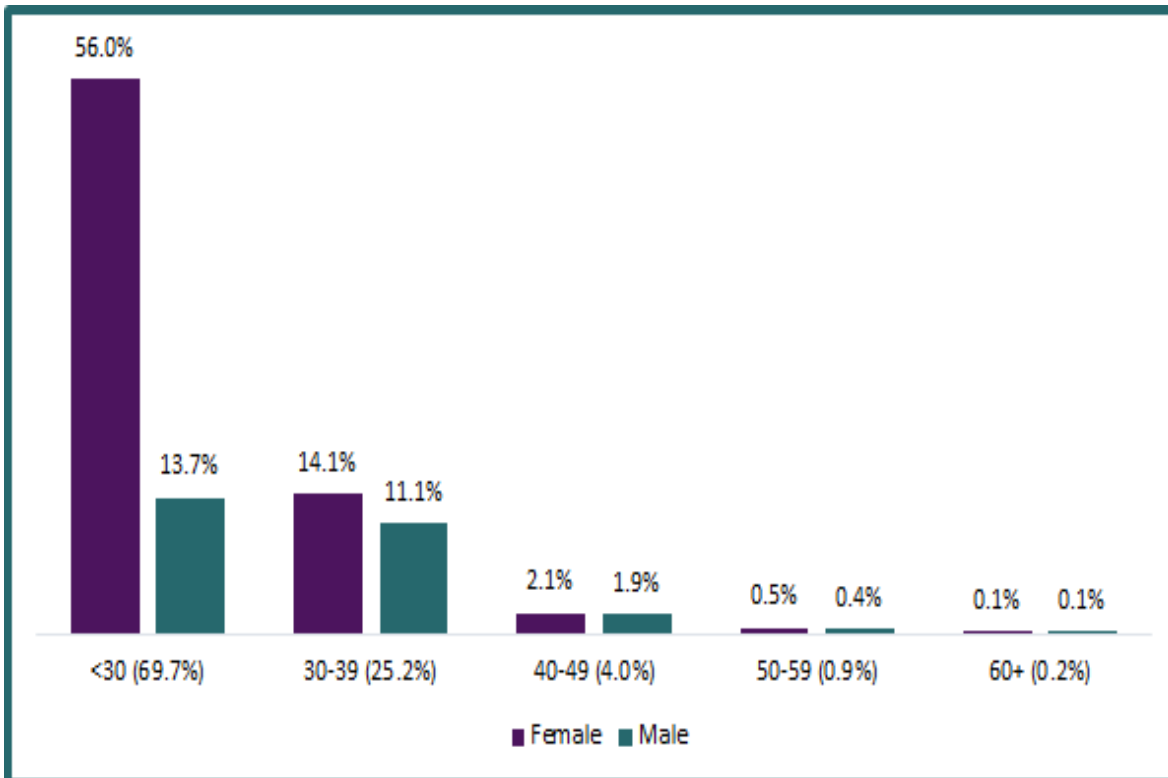


Table 2: Number of Recently Certified PAs by Gender

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	2,110	27.1%
Female	5,666	72.9%
Total	7,776	100.0%

Table 3: Number of Recently Certified PAs by Age

Age Group	Number	Percent
<30	5,421	69.7%
30-39	1,957	25.2%
40-49	311	4.0%
50-59	72	0.9%
60+	15	0.2%
TOTAL	7,776	100.0%

## Race and Ethnicity of Recently Certified PAs

Number of recently certified PAs by race; Number by ethnicity

**Table 4: Number and Percent of Recently Certified PAs by Race**

Race	Number	Percent
White	4,818	86.1%
Black/African American	174	3.1%
Asian	446	8.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	10	0.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	19	0.3
Other	132	2.4%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>5,599</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Respondents were able to choose multiple races, and 161 chose more than one race. Table 4 includes respondents from PAs who chose one race. 288 respondents indicated they preferred not to answer the question.

**Table 5: Number and Percent of Recently Certified PAs by Ethnicity**

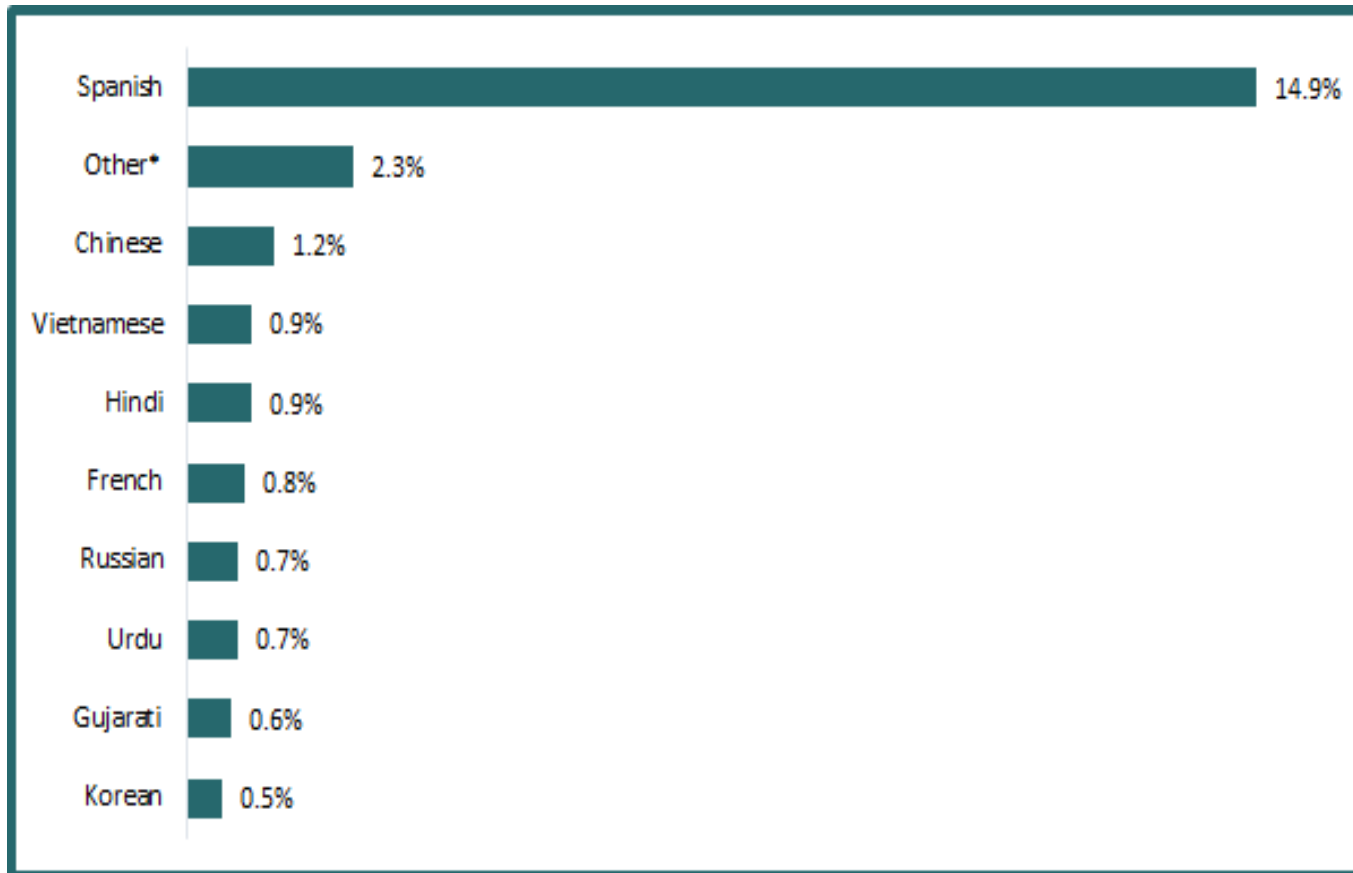
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Ethnicity	Number	Percent
Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano/a	143	2.5%
Puerto Rican	47	0.8%
Cuban	41	0.7%
Other Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin	167	2.9%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>6.9%</b>

Note: Respondents were able to choose multiple ethnicities. 45 respondents chose more than one ethnicity. 93.1% (5,795) of the recently certified PAs indicated they were not Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin. 219 respondents indicated they preferred not to answer the question.

## Languages Other than English Spoken with Patients

Top ten languages other than English spoken with patients

Figure 3: Percent of Recently Certified PAs who Communicate with Patients in Other Languages



Note: The percentage of recently certified PAs who communicate with patients in languages other than English by the top ten most frequently identified languages.

### Noteworthy:

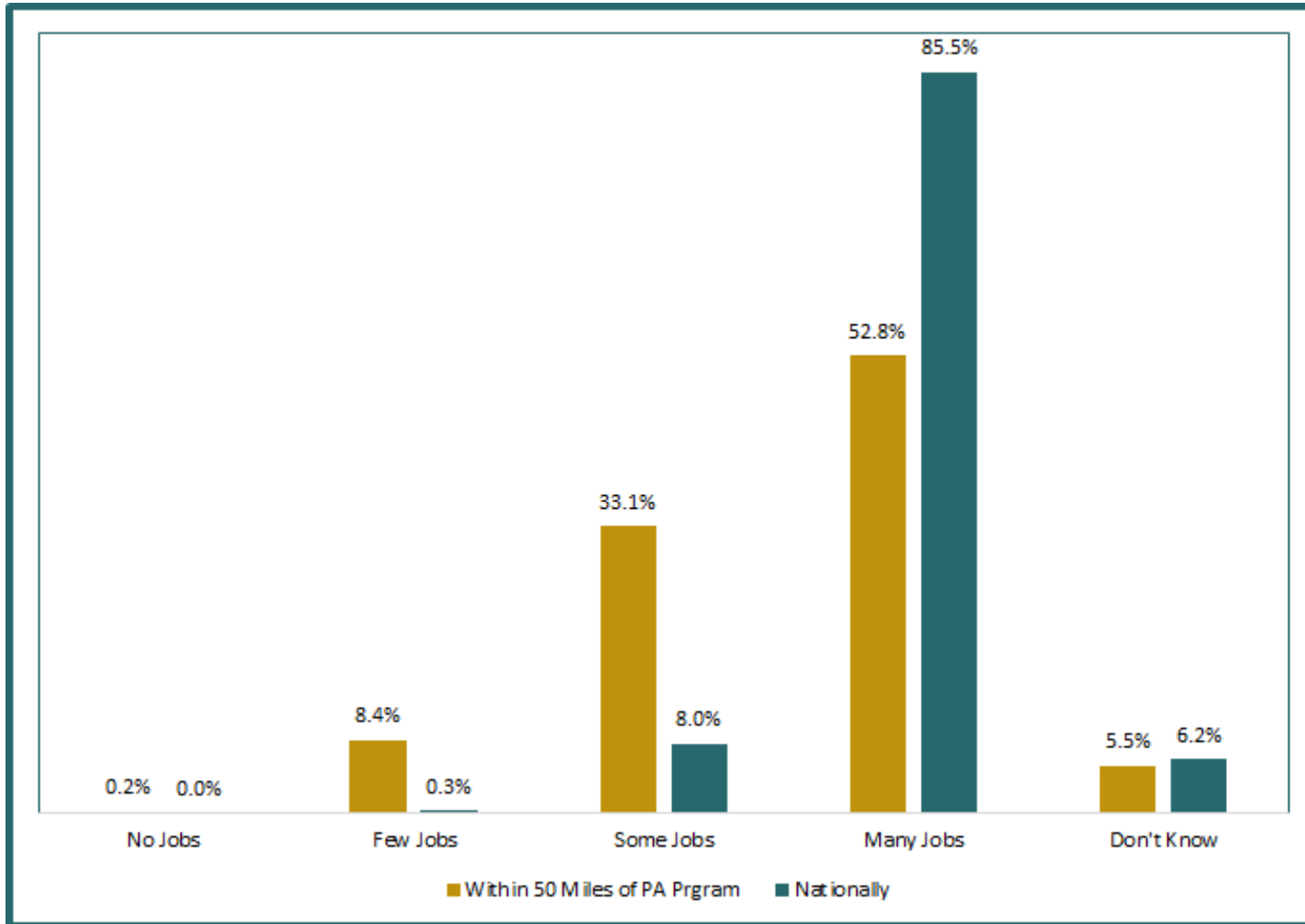
21.8% of recently certified PAs indicated they could communicate with patients in a language other than English. Additionally 2.7% could speak more than one language, other than English.

The percentage of recently certified PAs who indicated they can speak more than one language has increased steadily in the last three years. (17.7% in 2013, 18.2% in 2014 and 21.8% in 2015)

## Assessment of Opportunities

Assessment of opportunities within 50 miles of PA program;  
Assessment of opportunities nationally

Figure 4: Assessment of Job Opportunities



### Noteworthy:

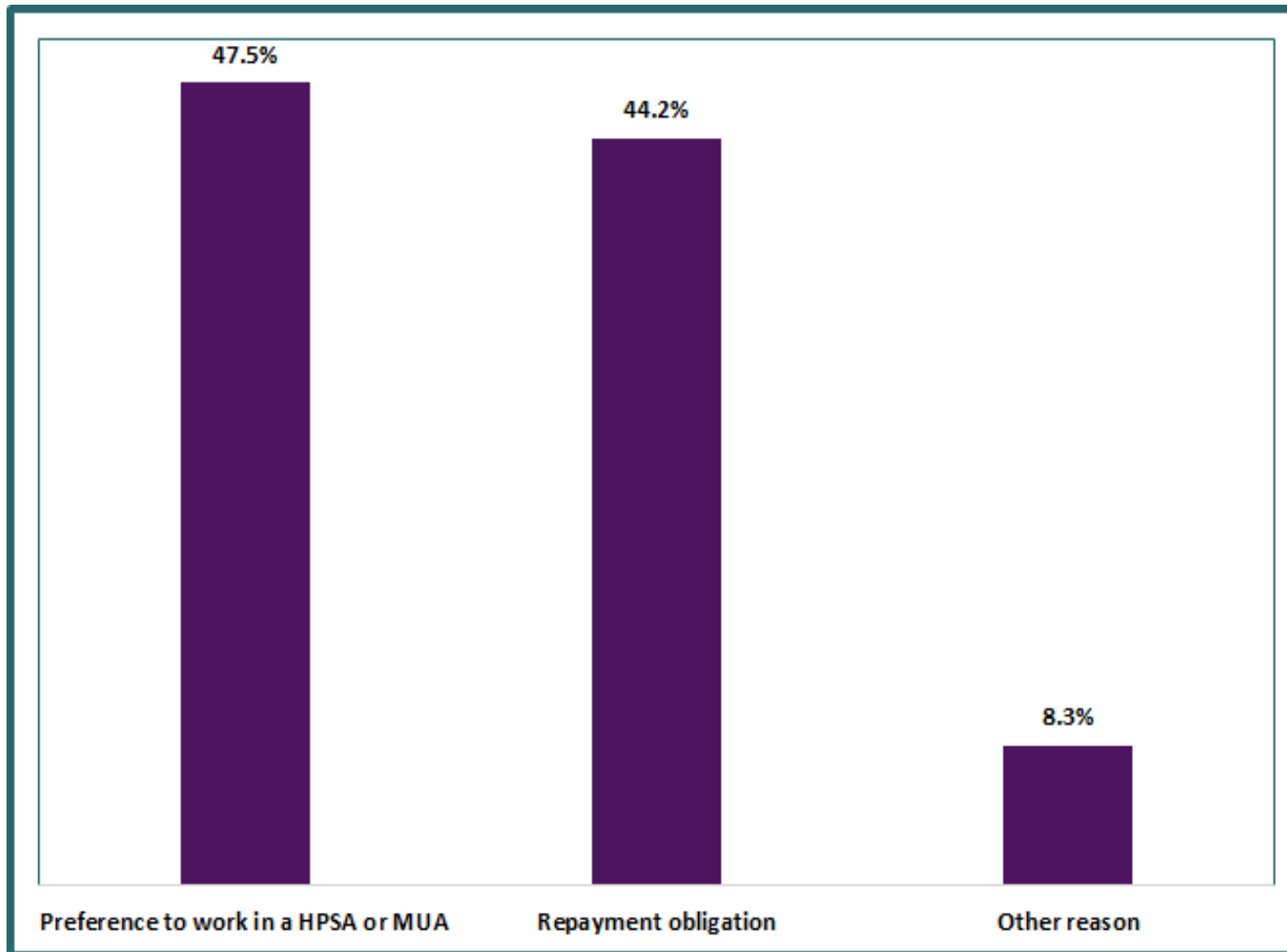
*Fortune* magazine ranked physician assistant as one of the “Best 15 Graduate Degrees for Jobs in 2016” (March, 2016). *U.S. News and World Report* ranked physician assistant as number five on their list of “The 100 Best Jobs of 2016” (January, 2016). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a growth of 30% from 2014 to 2024 (much faster than the average for all occupations)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2016-17 Edition*, Physician Assistants, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm> (visited August 21, 2016).

## Obligation that Requires a Position in a HPSA or MUA

Factors motivating PAs to accept a PA position in a HPSA (Health Professional Shortage Area) or MUA (Medically Underserved Area)

Figure 5: Motivation to Accept Position in HPSA or MUA



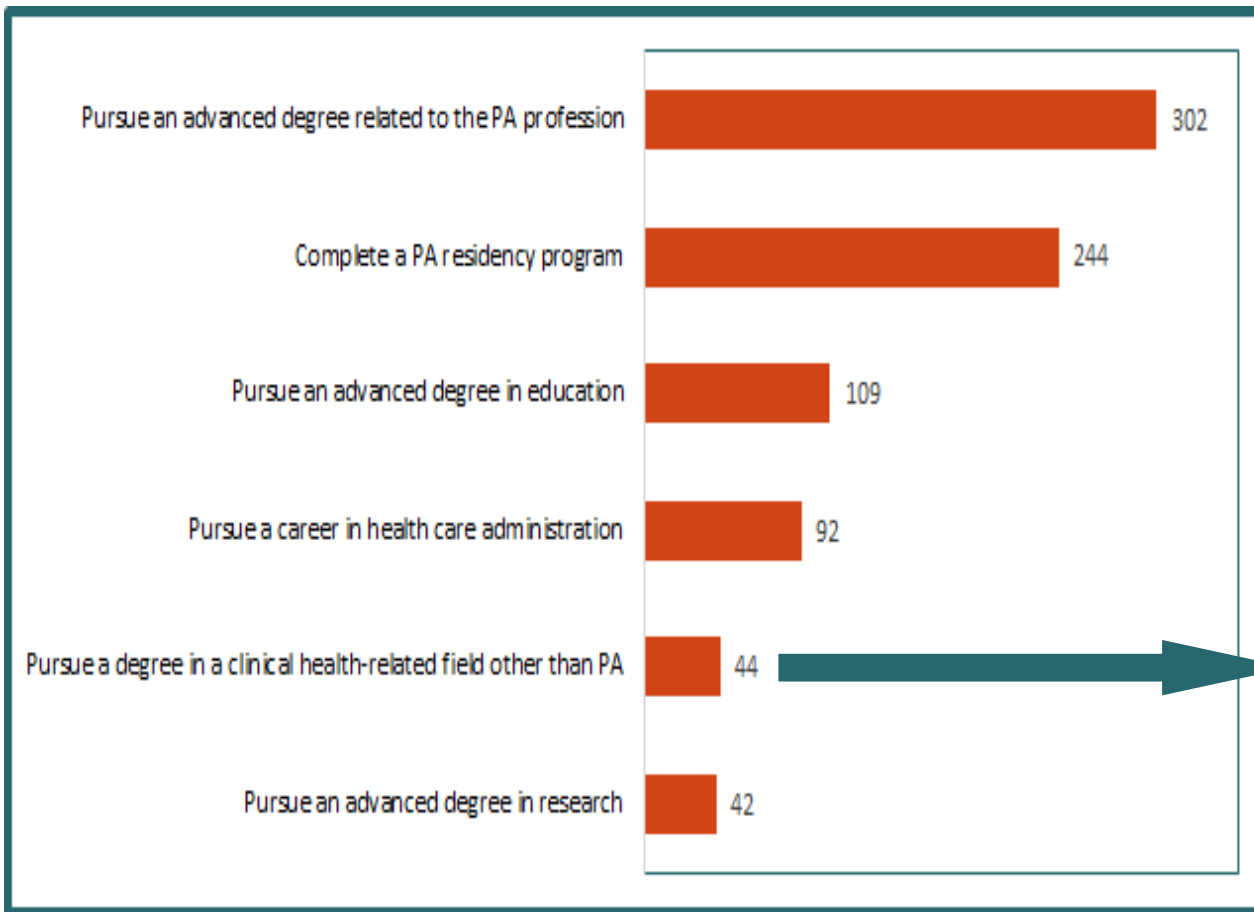
### Noteworthy:

Overall, 120 (2.5%) of the recently certified graduates indicated they are a National Health Service Corps Scholar or a state or federal loan repayment program participant which required practicing in a federally designated HPSA or MUA.

## Plans to Seek Additional Education or Clinical Training

Number and percent of recently certified PAs who plan to seek additional education or clinical training within the next three years; Reasons they are seeking additional education or clinical training; Degree pursuing if seeking for a new degree

Figure 6: Reasons PAs Are Seeking Additional Education or Clinical Training



### Noteworthy:

798 (16.6%) of recently certified PAs indicated they plan to seek additional education or clinical training within the next three years (this does not include on-the-job training or required CME).

Table 6: Degree Pursued if Changing Health Fields

Degree in Clinical Health-Related Field	Number
Public Health	22
MD or DO	16
Other	6

**Recently Certified Physician Assistants who  
Accepted a Clinical Position**

# Job Search in a Clinical PA Position

Acceptance of a job; Number of offers received

Figure 7: Recently Certified PAs Job Search and Status

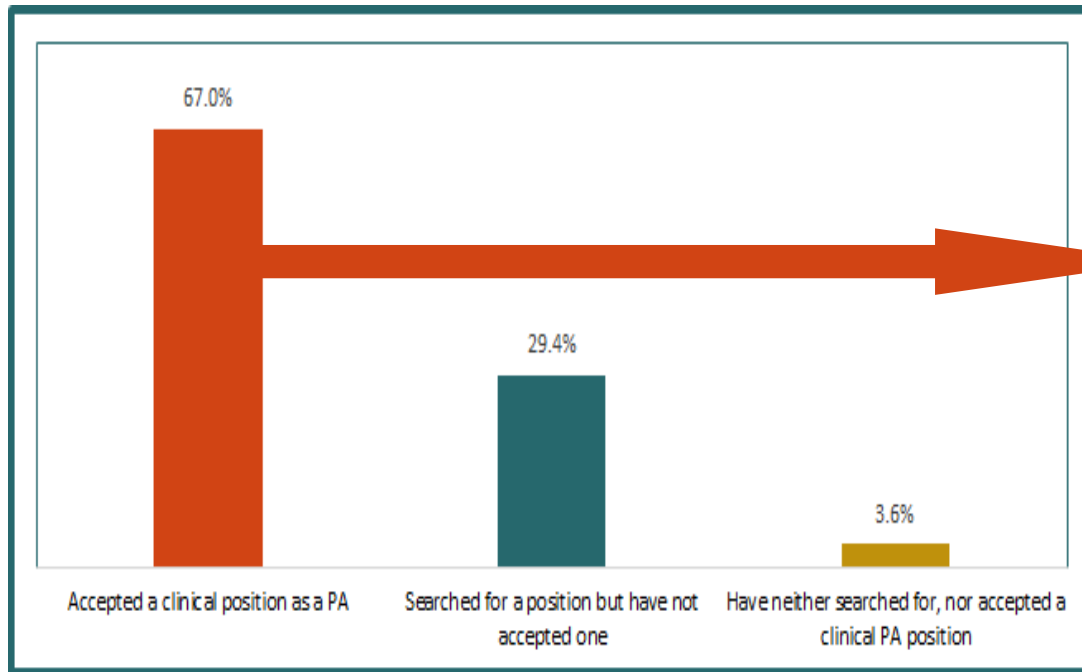


Figure 8: Number of Job Offers For Recently Certified PAs for Those who Accepted a Clinical Position as a PA

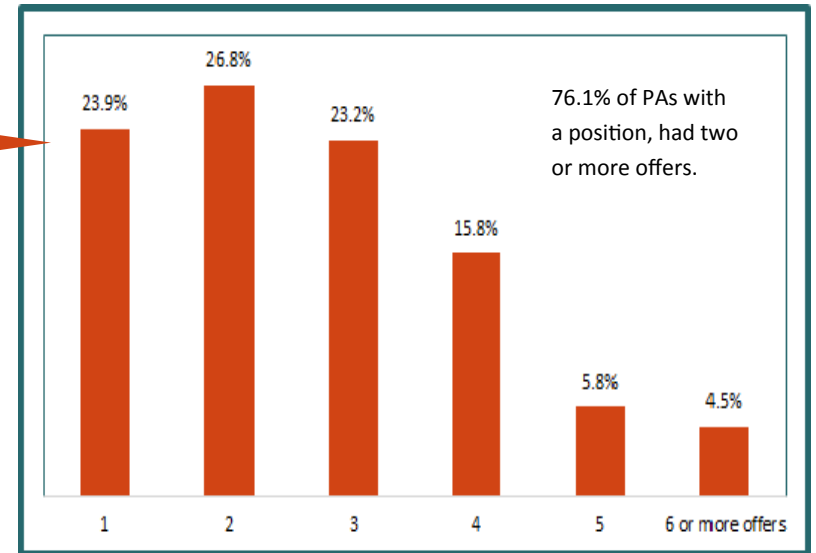


Table 7: Recently Certified PAs Job Search and Status

Clinical Position Search	Number
Yes, accepted a clinical position as a PA	3,217
Yes, searched for a position but have not yet accepted one	1,411
No, have neither searched for nor accepted a clinical PA position	172
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,800</b>



## Challenges Faced by Physician Assistants who Have Searched for and Accepted a PA Position

### Challenges faced in searching for a position

**Table 8: Challenges Faced by Physician Assistants who Have Searched for and Accepted a PA Position**

Challenges	Percent
Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates	14.1%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographic area	7.5%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred specialty	5.7%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in practice setting preferred	4.4%
Abundance of PA graduates competing for same position	4.3%
Inadequate salary and/or compensation offered	4.1%
Lack of clinical PA employment opportunities	1.9%
Lack of positions that meet obligations for employment (i.e. NHSC)	1.4%
Lack of opportunities for spouse/partner	0.8%

### **Noteworthy:**

“Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates” and “lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographical area” were the top two challenges cited for both recently certified PAs with a position and without a position.

80.3% of PAs who have accepted a position indicated that they did not face any challenges when searching for a job.

## Selection of Clinical Position Location

Geographical location; Training site

**Table 9: Location of Position Accepted**

Geographical Location	Number
Area where grew up	1,123
Area where PA program located	1,082
Area lived in prior to attending PA program	892
Area where want to live	688
Rural area	440
Other area	322
Urban medically underserved area	230

Note: Respondents were able to choose multiple locations.

### Noteworthy:

- 30.0% of PAs who accepted a position in a rural area, indicated that they grew up in a rural area.
- 30.4% of PAs who accepted a position in an urban medically underserved area indicated they grew up in an urban medically underserved area.

**Table 10: Position Accepted at a Training Site of Clinical Rotation**

Position at Training Site of Clinical Rotation	Number	Percent
Yes	1,245	38.7%
No	1,972	61.3%
TOTAL	3,217	100%

## Hours Working Per Week and Time Spent in Work Activities

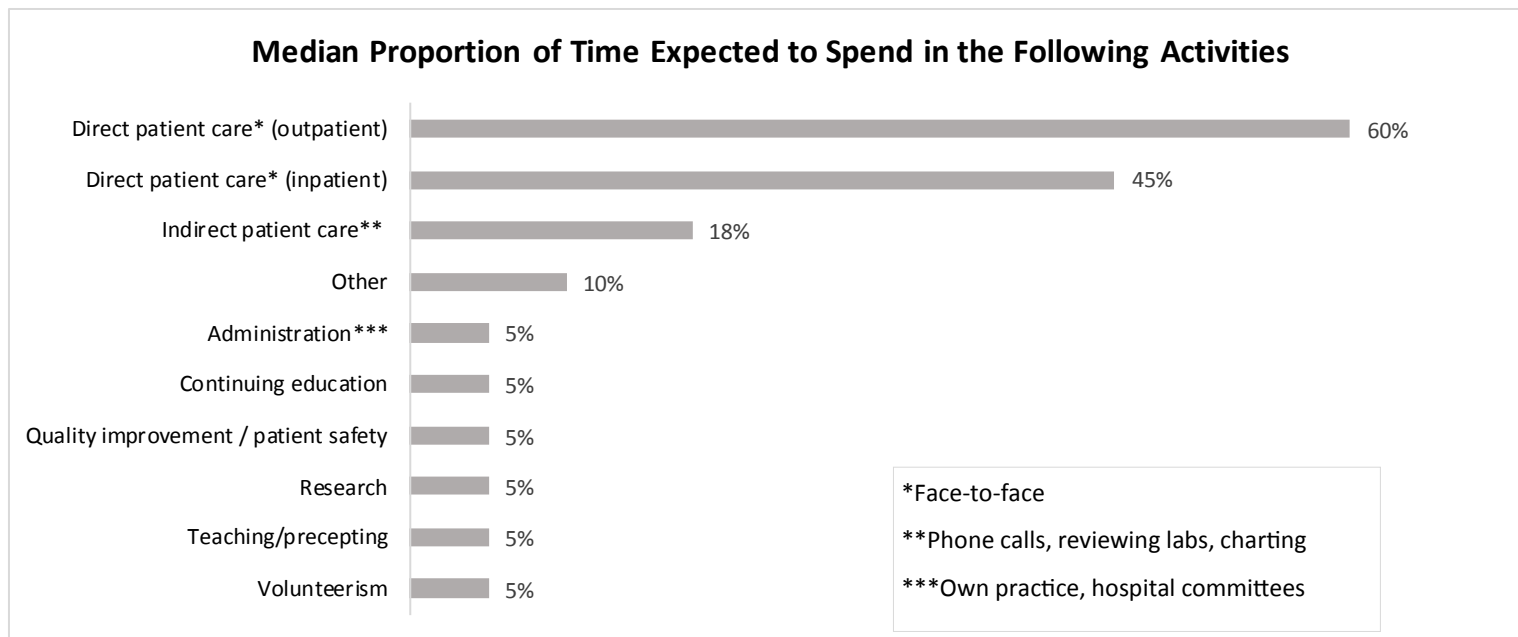
Number of working hours per week; Proportion of time spent in different work activities

**Table 11: Number of Hours Expected to Work Per Week**

Expected hours work per week	Number	Percent
1— 10 hours	16	0.5%
11—20 hours	18	0.6%
21—30 hours	35	1.1%
31—40 hours	1,500	46.6%
41—50 hours	1,396	43.4%
More than 50 hours	252	7.8%

Note: Over half (51.2%) of recently certified PAs who have accepted a clinical position expect to work more than 40 hours per week.

**Figure 9: Median Proportion of Time Expected to Spend in Activities**



## Practice Setting of Recently Certified Physician Assistants

Number and percent by practice setting of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position

**Table 12: Number and Percent of Recently Certified PAs by Practice Setting**

Practice Setting	Number	Percent
Hospital	1,621	50.4%
Office-based private practice	1,180	36.7%
Community health center	91	2.8%
United States military (federal government)	81	2.5%
Rural health clinic	58	1.8%
Behavioral/mental health facility	29	0.9%
Public or community health clinic (non-federally qualified)	25	0.8%
Ambulatory surgical center	21	0.7%
Veterans Administration (federal government)	12	0.4%
Indian health service (federal government)	11	0.3%
School-based or college-based health center or school clinic	11	0.3%
Extended care facility/Nursing home	8	0.3%
Occupational health setting	7	0.2%
Rehabilitation facility	5	0.2%
Home health care agency	4	0.1%
Public health service (federal government)	4	0.1%
Bureau of Prisons (federal government)	4	0.1%
Free clinic	1	<0.1%
Unsure/Don't know	43	1.3%
TOTAL	3,216	100.0%

**Noteworthy:**  
 50.4% of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position work in a hospital setting. Overall, 37.7% of PAs work in a hospital setting.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Inc. (2016, March). *2015 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants: An Annual Report of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.*

## Practice Area of Recently Certified PAs

Number and percent by principal area of practice of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position

**Table 13: Number and Percent of Recently Certified PAs by Principal Clinical Area**

Area of Practice	Number	Percent
Adolescent Medicine	1	<0.1%
Anesthesiology	8	0.2%
Critical Care Medicine	74	2.3%
Dermatology	80	2.5%
Emergency Medicine	607	18.9%
Family Medicine / General Practice	656	20.4%
Gynecology	4	0.1%
Hospital Medicine	166	5.2%
Internal Medicine– General Practice	145	4.5%
Internal Medicine– Subspecialties	270	8.4%
Neurology	23	0.7%
Obstetrics and Gynecology	27	0.8%
Occupational Medicine	6	0.2%
Ophthalmology	2	0.1%

Area of Practice	Number	Percent
Otolaryngology	20	0.6%
Pathology	1	<0.1%
Pediatrics	66	2.0%
Pediatrics– Subspecialties	47	1.5%
Physical Medicine / Rehabilitation	19	0.6%
Preventive Medicine / Public Health	1	<0.1%
Psychiatry	50	1.6%
Radiation Oncology	2	0.1%
Radiology	9	0.3%
Surgery– General	122	3.8%
Surgery– Subspecialties	542	16.8%
Urology	28	0.9%
Other	241	7.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,217</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Noteworthy:**

26.9% of recently certified PAs with a clinical position work in primary care: family medicine/general practice, general internal medicine, and general pediatrics. This is a slight decrease from the previous year.

Overall, 28.3% of certified PAs work in primary care.

27.9% of female recently certified PAs chose a primary care specialty, while 24.7% of males did so.

## Salary and Educational Debt

Salary and educational debt of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position.

**Table 14: Number and Percent by Educational Debt**

Debt Range	Number	Percent
None	294	9.4%
Less than \$25,000	124	4.0%
\$25,000—\$49,999	216	7.0%
\$50,000—\$74,999	319	10.3%
\$75,000—\$99,999	421	13.5%
\$100,000—\$124,999	477	15.3%
\$125,000—\$149,999	415	13.4%
\$150,000—\$174,999	400	12.9%
\$175,000—\$199,999	229	7.4%
\$200,000—\$224,999	122	3.9%
\$225,000 or more	89	2.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,106</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: 111 recently certified PAs chose “Prefer not to answer”

**Table 15: Number and Percent by Salary Range**

Starting Salary Range	Number	Percent
Less than or equal to \$40,000	3	0.1%
\$40,001—\$50,000	27	0.9%
\$50,001—\$60,000	62	2.0%
\$60,001—\$70,000	80	2.6%
\$70,001—\$80,000	459	14.7%
\$80,001—\$90,000	1,162	37.3%
\$90,001—\$100,000	796	25.5%
\$100,001—\$110,000	295	9.5%
\$110,001—\$120,000	124	4.0%
\$120,001—\$130,000	60	1.9%
\$130,001—\$140,000	26	0.8%
\$140,001 or more	22	0.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,116</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: 101 recently certified PAs chose “Prefer not to answer”

### Noteworthy:

16.8% of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position indicated that educational debt influenced their decision to seek a primary care or non-primary care position.

### Educational Debt

Median: \$112,500

Mean: \$107,365

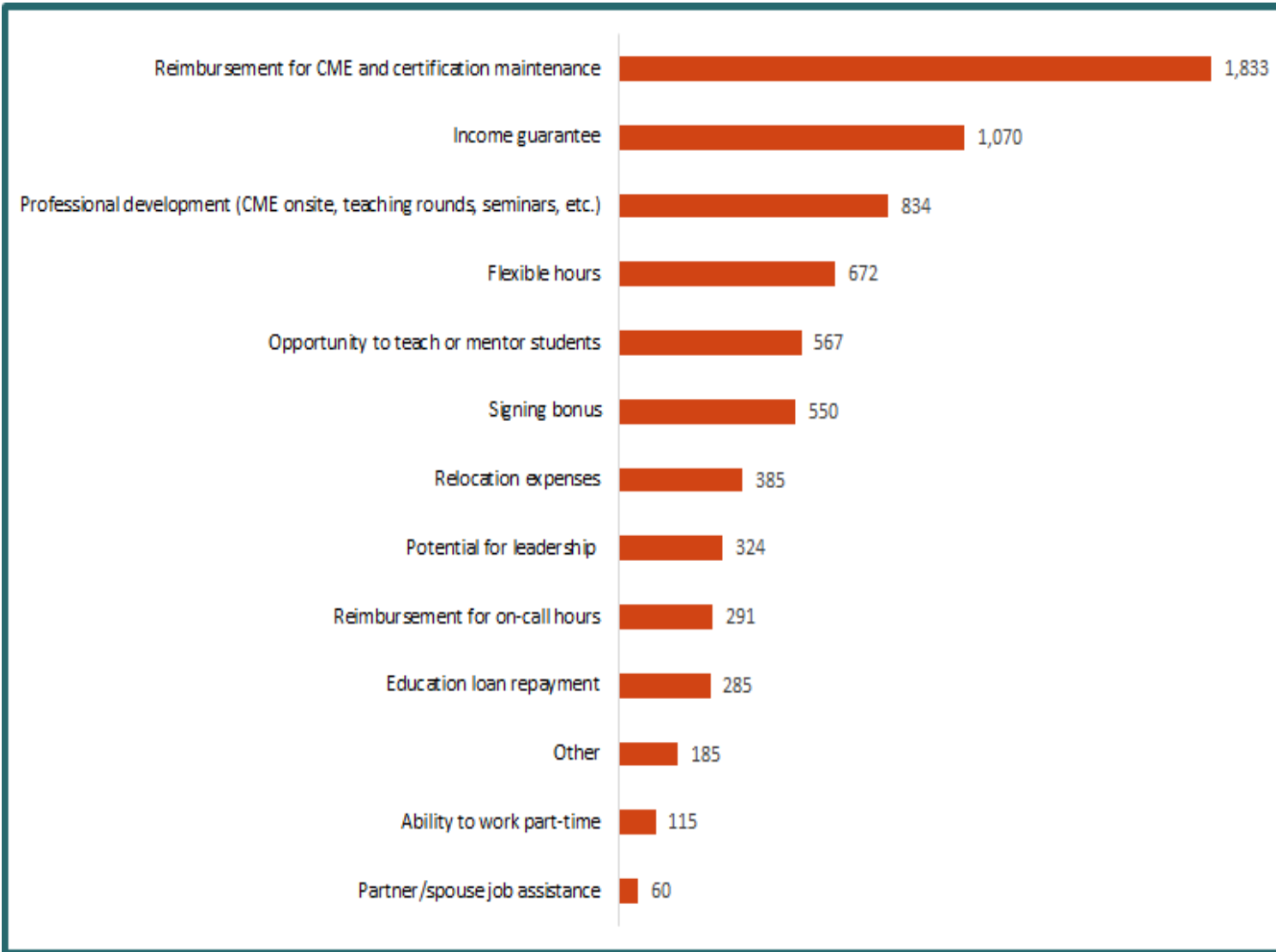
### Salary

Median: \$85,000

Mean: \$89,319

## Employment Incentives

Figure 10: Incentives Offered to Recently Certified PAs



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one incentive.

### Noteworthy:

65.3% of the recently certified PAs who accepted a position indicated they were offered employment incentives.

When asked to rank order the top three incentives that most influenced their decision to accept the position they were in, the incentives that ranked in the top three were:

1. Income guarantee
2. Reimbursement for CME and certification maintenance
3. Flexible hours

This differs from Figure 10 due to some incentives that were chosen but not ranked in the top three. Respondents were able to choose multiple incentives.

**Recently Certified Physician Assistants who  
Have Not Accepted a Clinical Position**



## Challenges Faced by PAs that Have Searched for a Job but Have Not Accepted One

Challenges faced in searching for a position; Reasons PAs have not searched for or accepted a position

**Table 16: Challenges faced by Recently Certified PAs who have Not Accepted a Position or are Currently Searching for a Position**

Challenges	Percent
Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates	31.3%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographic area	15.4%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred specialty	12.3%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred practice setting	10.3%
Abundance of PA graduates competing for same position	8.3%
Inadequate salary and/or compensation offered	4.5%
Lack of positions that meet obligations for employment (i.e. NHSC)	1.6%
Lack of clinical PA employment opportunities	3.6%
Lack of opportunities for spouse/partner	0.9%

### Noteworthy:

69.8% of recently certified PAs who have not searched for nor accepted a position stated that they decided to take time off before they began their career (an increase from 2013 and 2014), 1.2% said they decided to work in a non-PA position, and 29.0% cited other reasons.

58.3% who have searched for but have not accepted a position indicated they have not experienced challenges when searching for a job.

Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates and lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographic area were the top two challenges cited in 2013, 2014, and 2015 for both PAs who have searched for and accepted a PA position and those who have searched for but have not yet accepted a position.

## Reasons Recently Certified PAs Did Not Accept a Position Offered

**Table 17: Reasons Recently Certified PAs Did Not Accept a Position**

Reasons Cited	Number
Not in preferred area of practice	124
Other reason	63
Did not feel it was a good personal match with potential supervisor	23
Insufficient compensation	20
Too much on-call time	6
Insufficient learning for continued professional growth	5
Wanted PA to assume too much responsibility for their level of experience	4
Would not allow physician assistant to sufficiently utilize the competencies gained from education	3
Insufficient benefits	2
Insufficient supervision onsite	1

### Noteworthy:

32.8% of recently certified PAs who have searched for but not yet accepted a position indicated they have turned down at least one offer.

## Selection of Preferred Clinical Position Location

Geographic location preferred by recently certified PAs who have not yet accepted a position

**Table 18: Location of Position Preferred by Physician Assistants who Have Not Accepted a Position**

Geographic Location	Number
Area where grew up	229
Area lived in prior to attending PA program	199
Area where want to live	213
Area where PA program is located	156
Urban medically underserved area	36
Rural area	30
Other area	110

### **Noteworthy:**

Recently certified PAs prefer to work in the area in which they grew up.

9.9% indicated they prefer an area where their PA program is located.

## Hours Preferred to Work Per Week and Preferred Time Spent in Work Activities

Number of preferred working hours per week; Preferred proportion of time spent in different work activities

Figure 11: Preferred Proportion of Time Spent in Activities

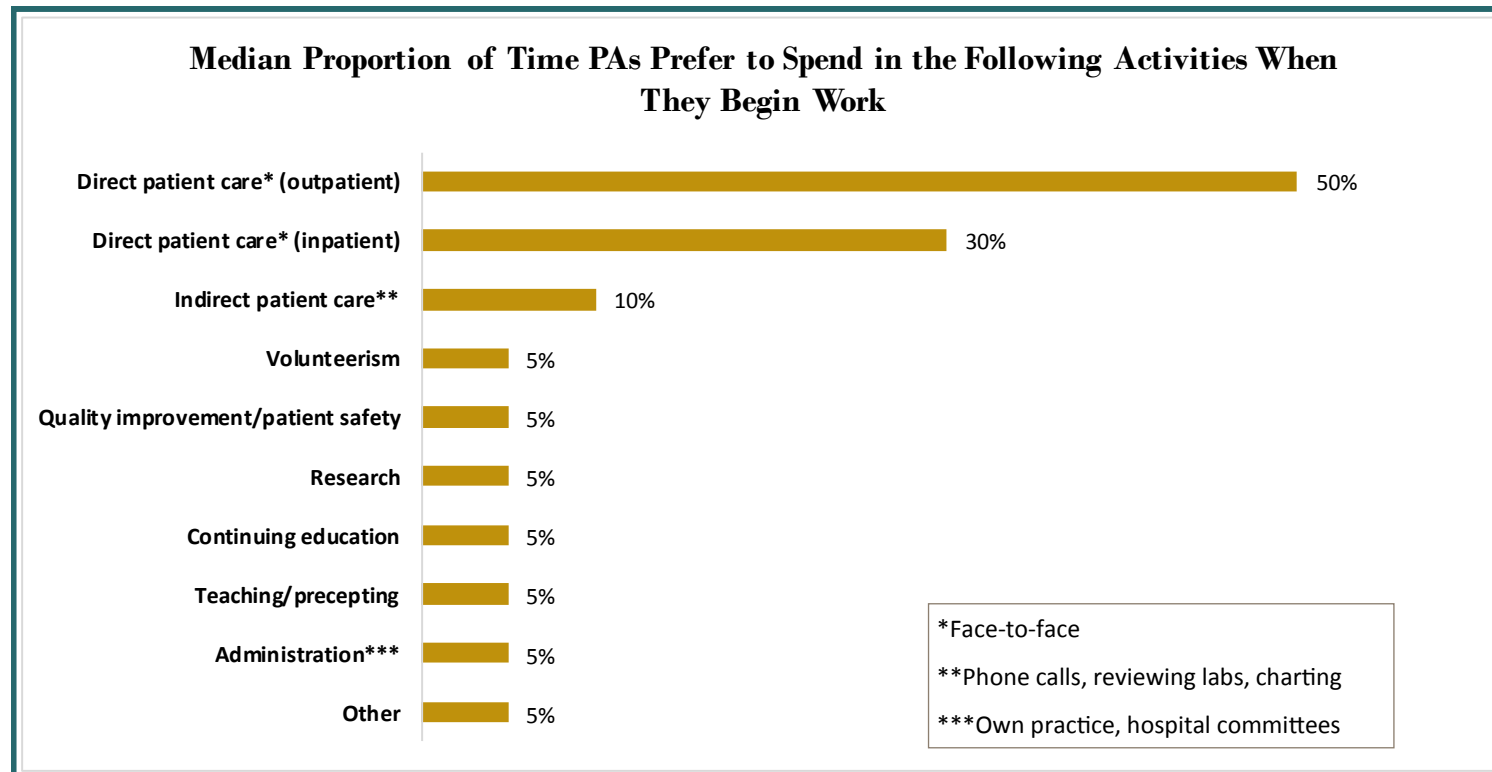


Table 19: Preferred Number of Hours to Work per Week When PA Does Accept a Position

Preferred work hours per week	Number	Percent
1—10 hours	4	0.3%
10—20 hours	11	0.7%
21—30 hours	14	0.9%
31—40 hours	934	59.0%
41—50 hours	582	36.8%
More than 50 hours	37	2.3%

Note: 39.1% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted a clinical position prefer to work more than 40 hours per week (slightly less than in 2013 where 44.9% preferred work more than 40 hours per week). Of those who have accepted a position, 51.2% report they expect to work more than 40 hours per week.

## Practice Setting Preferred by Recently Certified PAs who Have Not Accepted a Position

**Table 20: Number and Percent of Physician Assistants by Preferred Practice Setting**

Practice Setting	Number	Percent
Hospital	616	38.9%
Office-based private practice	573	36.2%
Community health center	47	3.0%
Ambulatory surgical center	25	1.6%
Veterans Administration (Federal government)	19	1.2%
Rural health clinic	16	1.0%
United States Military (Federal government)	11	0.7%
Free clinic	5	0.3%
Indian health service (Federal government)	5	0.3%
Public or community health clinic (non-federally qualified)	4	0.3%
Behavioral/mental health facility	4	0.3%
Public health service (Federal government)	2	0.1%
Rehabilitation facility	2	0.1%
School-based or college-based health center or school clinic	2	0.1%
Home health care agency	1	0.1%
Extended care facility / nursing home	1	0.1%
No preference	249	15.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,582</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Noteworthy:

38.9% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position indicated they would prefer to work in a hospital setting, and 50.4% who have accepted a position work in a hospital setting. 15.7% had no preference or were undecided.

## Practice Area Preferred by Recently Certified PAs who Have Not Accepted a Position

**Table 21: Number and Percent of PAs by Preferred Practice Area**

Preferred Area of Practice	Number	Percent
Adolescent Medicine	1	<0.1%
Anesthesiology	0	0.0%
Critical Care Medicine	28	1.8%
Dermatology	89	5.6%
Emergency Medicine	303	19.1%
Family Medicine / General Practice	322	20.4%
Gynecology	2	0.1%
Hospital Medicine	56	3.5%
Internal Medicine– General Practice	83	5.2%
Internal Medicine– Subspecialty	86	5.4%
Neurology	6	0.4%
Obstetrics and Gynecology	27	1.7%
Occupational Medicine	0	0.0%
Ophthalmology	1	<0.1%
Otolaryngology	4	0.2%

Preferred Area of Practice	Number	Percent
Pathology	0	0.0%
Pediatrics	55	3.5%
Pediatrics– Subspecialties	31	<1.9%
Physical Medicine / Rehabilitation	2	0.1%
Preventive Medicine / Public Health	1	<0.1%
Psychiatry	8	0.5%
Radiation Oncology	1	<0.1%
Radiology	3	0.2%
Surgery– General	67	4.2%
Surgery– Subspecialties	223	14.3%
Urology	5	0.3%
Other	39	2.5%
No Preference	139	8.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,582</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Noteworthy:

29.1% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position prefer to work in primary care: family medicine/general practice, general internal medicine, and general pediatrics. This is a decrease from 2013 and 2014 (31.5% and 32.9% respectively).

30.8% of female recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position prefer a position in primary care, while 23.9% of males do.

## Salary Desired by PAs and Educational Debt

Salary desired by recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position;  
educational debt of PAs who have not accepted a position

**Table 22: Number and Percent by Educational Debt**

Debt Range	Number	Percent
None	145	9.5%
Less than \$25,000	63	4.1%
\$25,000—\$49,999	83	5.5%
\$50,000—\$74,999	161	10.6%
\$75,000—\$99,999	211	13.9%
\$100,000—\$124,999	216	14.2%
\$125,000—\$149,999	218	14.3%
\$150,000—\$174,999	207	13.6%
\$175,000—\$199,999	97	6.3%
\$200,000—\$224,999	64	4.2%
\$225,000 or more	19	1.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

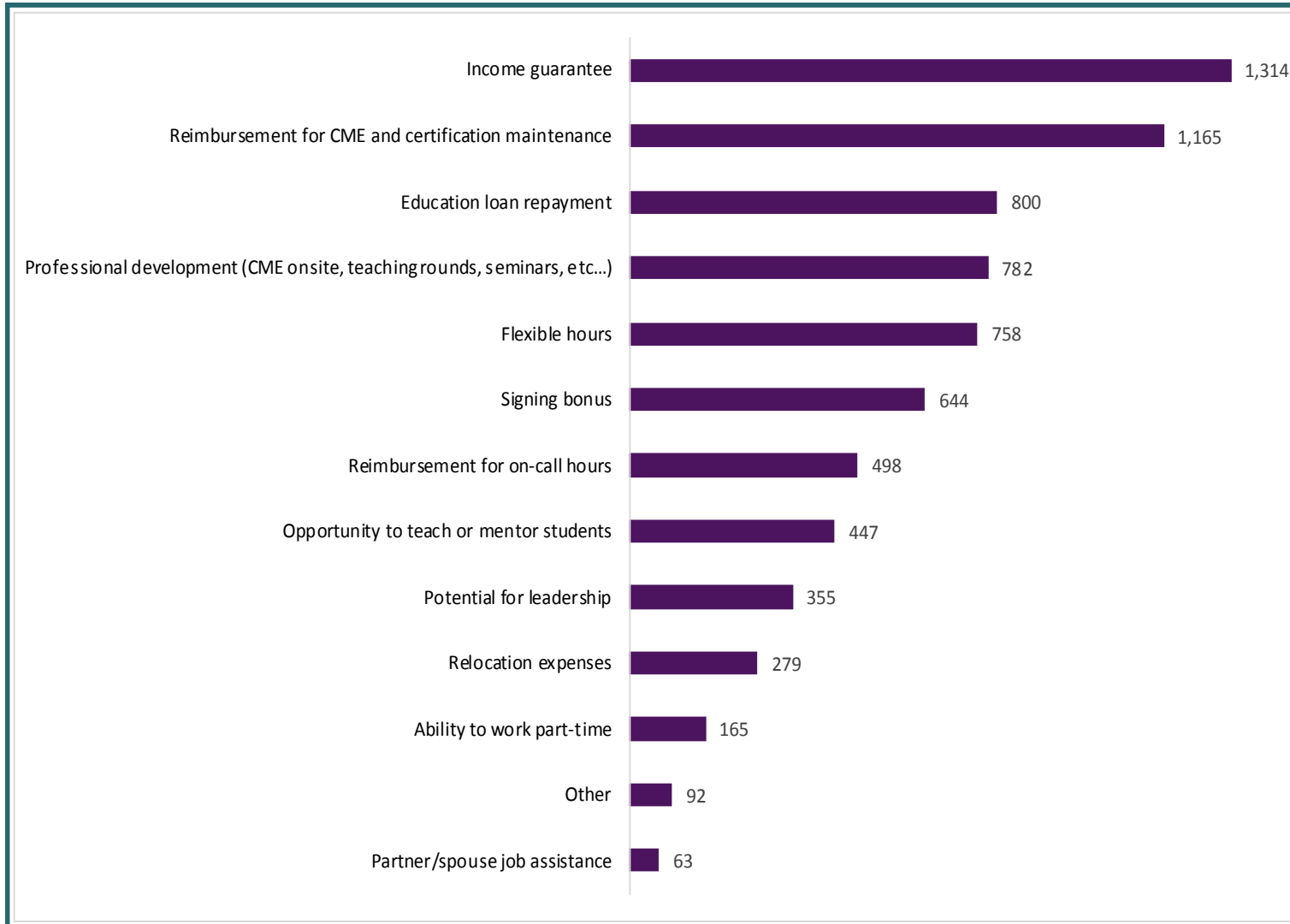
**Table 23: Number and Percent by Desired Salary**

Starting Salary Range	Number	Percent
Less than or equal to \$40,000	1	<0.1%
\$40,001—\$50,000	0	0.0%
\$50,001—\$60,000	5	0.3%
\$60,001—\$70,000	39	2.5%
\$70,001—\$80,000	302	19.6%
\$80,001—\$90,000	751	48.8%
\$90,001—\$100,000	346	22.5%
\$100,001—\$110,000	75	4.9%
\$110,000—\$120,000	13	0.8%
\$120,001 or more	7	0.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,539</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Noteworthy:**  
22.9% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position indicated that educational debt influenced their decision to seek a primary care or non-primary care position. Of the PAs who have accepted a position, 16.8% said their level of educational debt influenced their choice.

## Employment Incentives Desired by Recently Certified PAs who Have Not Accepted a Position

Figure 12: Incentives Desired



### Noteworthy:

When asked to rank order the top three incentives they are looking for in their first clinical PA position, the top three were:

1. Income guarantee
2. Education loan repayment
3. Flexible hours

This differs from Figure 12 due to some incentives that were chosen but not ranked in the top three. Respondents were able to choose multiple incentives.



## Future Data on Certified PAs

NCCPA pursues a research agenda that focuses on its core activities and the ongoing evaluation and improvement of its exams and certification program. NCCPA is also committed to collaborating with external researchers to share data in appropriate and ethical ways to further advance the health and safety of the public or otherwise conduct useful research related to PAs. To facilitate research collaborations, NCCPA developed *Policies for the Review of Requests for Data and External Research Collaboration* and guidelines that describe the process external researchers will need to follow for submitting requests for data and how those requests will be reviewed. The policies and guidelines are provided on NCCPA's web site at <http://www.nccpa.net/Research>.

This *Statistical Profile of Recently Certified Physician Assistants* will be updated and published annually. In addition, there are reports that are currently available. Those reports include:

- Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants
- Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants by Specialty
- Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants by State

Please cite this work using the following:

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This study is exempt from IRB review pursuant to the terms of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects at 45 C.F.R. §46.101(b).

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