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NCCPA Certifies 100,000th Physician Assistant

PA profession one of the fastest growing and top ranked jobs in the nation

Johns Creek, GA, September 25, 2012 – The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is proud to announce the certification of the 100,000th physician assistant (PA-C) in the nation since the organization's inception nearly 40 years ago.

Polina Burt, PA-C, NCCPA's 100,000th certified PA, began studying in 2009 in the Physician Assistant Studies Program at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y. She graduated in May 2012 with a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies. Burt is currently employed at City Central Dermatology in Brooklyn and Queens, N.Y.

"I love my job – everyday is something new," said Burt. "Anyone who is looking for a medical career that provides you stability, an opportunity to solve problems and to be able to care for and educate patients should consider being a PA. It's very rewarding."



The PA profession was originally developed in the mid-1960s when a large number of military corpsmen were returning to civilian life. Today, certified PAs work in virtually every medical setting and specialty and provide a broad range of care including taking histories and conducting physical examinations, ordering and interpreting tests, diagnosing and treating illnesses, prescribing medications, and assisting in and performing surgery. Certified PAs perform these duties within a scope of practice established by a supervising physician in accordance with state regulations, but generally speaking, they can perform virtually any tasks delegated by the physician with whom they work.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has predicted the PA profession would grow by 39 percent and be the second fastest growing health profession between 2008 and 2018. Additionally, Forbes.com ranked PAs first in its list of best master's degrees for jobs, CNNMoney.com ranked PAs as number two on its "best jobs in America" list, and *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the PA profession as one of the "50 best careers" of 2011.

"Pressures on the health care delivery system are growing, but physician-PA teams are bridging gaps in health care for patients in communities throughout the U.S.," said NCCPA chair, Patricia A. Cook, MD, FACP.

According to the Accreditation Review Commission on Physician Assistant Education (ARC-PA), the profession's accreditation authority, the number of accredited PA programs increased from 54 in 1991 to 159 in 2011 and is poised to continue to grow significantly with more than 50 new programs in the process of seeking accreditation that could potentially be accredited by the end of 2015.

Most recently, NCCPA has offered certified PAs an opportunity to document their experience in their specialty field with a Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ). CAQs are offered in emergency medicine, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, nephrology, orthopaedic surgery and psychiatry. For more information, visit www.NCCPA.net.

About the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the only certifying organization for physician assistants (PAs) in the United States. The PA-C credential is awarded by NCCPA to PAs who fulfill certification, certification maintenance, and recertification requirements. There are approximately 86,500 certified PAs in the U.S. today. In 2011, NCCPA launched its Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) program for certified physician assistants practicing in Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Nephrology, Orthopaedic Surgery, and Psychiatry. For more information, please visit www.NCCPA.net or call (678) 417-8100.

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