

**2014 UKAPA Census Results
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Introduction:

The census was administered in May and June 2014. We believe there are 298 people (191 PAs and 107 students) who live in the UK who are eligible to respond. 135 PAs and 73 PA students living in the UK responded.

208 / 298 = 69.8% total response rate

135 / 191 PAs believed to be living in the UK and eligible to practice as a PA = 70.6% response rate
73 UK PA students / 107 students nationwide = 68.2% response rate (down from 95% last year)

Current Practice Status of the 135 who are not PA students: (note – each respondent was allowed to choose more than one status):

- 118 Practicing as a PA
- 9 Practicing as a PA in a training post
- 8 PA Educators (all 8 these also chose “Practicing as a PA”).
- 4 Researcher (2 of these also chose “Practicing as a PA”)
- 2 “Working but not as a PA”
- 3 Currently seeking work as a PA
- 2 “Taking time off for personal reasons”

Primary Practice Settings in which PAs work: (many PAs work in more than one setting – for example, Theatre and Inpatient Ward)

- 32 GP surgery – multiple GPs
- 18 A and E
- 35 Hospital Inpatient Ward
- 3 Hospital Intensive Care Unit
- 4 Hospital Operating Theatre –
- 6 Hospital Outpatient Department
- 17 Medical Assessment Unit or Acute Medical Unit
- 1 Rehabilitation Facility
- 2 Specialist surgery – multiple doctors
- 6 Specialist surgery – solo doctor
- 1 Walk in centre / out of hours
- 1 Hospital based liaison psychiatry service
- 1 Other psychiatry service

Hours, Call, and Home Visits:

Mean number of hours worked per week is 38.2. Median is 39 hours per week. Range is 10 – 55h/week.

14 PAs perform home visits.

18 PAs take call for their practice / service

Specialties (participants were allowed choose more than one specialty –all are incorporated here)

Generalist Specialties:

- 1 Community Medicine
- 3 Educators
- 22 Emergency Medicine
- 31 General Practice
- 1 Public Health

Adult Medical Specialties:

- 20 Acute Medicine
- 5 Cardiology
- 6 Care of the Elderly / Geriatrics (down from 7 last year)
- 2 Dermatology
- 2 Endocrinology
- 1 Gastroenterology
- 4 General Internal Medicine
- 1 Genitourinary Medicine / Sexual Health
- 1 Haemetology
- 1 Infectious Diseases
- 1 Lymphoedema
- 1 Nephrology
- 4 Neurology
- 2 Psychiatry
- 2 Rehabilitation Medicine
- 3 Respiratory Medicine

Paediatric Specialties:

- 3 Critical Care

Surgical Specialties:

- 1 Breast surgery
- 0 Colorectal Surgery – new last year, dropped out this year
- 1 Maxillofacial Surgery
- 3 Neurosurgery
- 4 Orthopaedic Surgery
- 2 Otolaryngology
- 1 Paediatric Surgery
- 2 Plastic Surgery
- 1 Spinal Surgery
- 11 Trauma and Orthopaedics

- 1 Trauma Surgery
- 1 Urology
- 2 Vascular Surgery

Location:

PAs are clustered in London and in the West Midlands (around universities which have or had PA courses) with a growing contingent in Scotland.

	England	Gibraltar	Scotland	No Answer	Total
Graduate PAs	118	1	16	0	135
Student	59	0	14	0	73
Total	177	1	30	0	208

Training of Respondents:

Graduate PAs – total response rate for graduate PAs = 70.6%

Aberdeen University	University of Birmingham	Hertfordshire University	St. George’s University of London	Wolverhampton University	Other (mostly US-trained)
8 (5.9%)	35 (25.9%)	10 (7.4%)	50 (37.0%)	17 (12.6%)	15 (11.1%)

PA Students – total response rate for students 68.2%

(note, survey performed in May / June 2014 – programs which opened in Fall 2014 were not included)

Aberdeen University	University of Birmingham	St. George’s University of London
16 (21.6%)	20 (27.0%)	38 (51.4%)

Gender of PAs and PA students:

Gender	Graduate PAs	PA Students
Female	95	49
Male	39	23
Prefer not to answer	1	1

Ethnicity of PAs and PA students:

Ethnicity	Graduate PAs	PA Students
Asian: Bangladeshi	1	1
Asian: Indian	13	9
Asian: Pakistani	5	9
Asian: Sri Lankan	2	1
Black: African	8	5
Black: Caribbean	0	2
Black: Other Black	3	3
Chinese	1	1
Mixed: White and Asian	2	3
Mixed: White and British Caribbean	0	0
Mixed: Other mixed persons	2	3
Other Ethnic Group	1	3
Prefer not to answer	2	2
White: British	72	29
White: Irish	3	0
White: Other	20	2
Total	135	73

Tasks and Procedures Performed by Currently Practicing PAs regardless of specialty, sorted in order of frequency

Take medical history
Perform physical examination
Perform patient education
Interpret ECG
Take bloods / perform venipuncture
Perform psychiatric assessment
Pelvic examination (palpation of cervix, uterus, adnexae)
Perform IV cannulation
Arterial blood gas
Urinary catheterisation
Suturing
NG tube placement
Joint aspiration / injection
Nerve blocks
Cervical smear
Incision and drainage of abscesses
Dislocation reduction
Fracture reduction
Casting / splinting
Mole removal
Skin biopsy
Surgical first assisting
Lipoma removal
Chest tube insertion
Fetal heart tones
Contraceptive implant placement
Contraceptive implant removal
General newborn examination
IUD removal
Intubation
FAST Ultrasound for Trauma
Lumbar puncture
Haematoma blocks
Paracentesis
Thoracentesis
Antenatal care
Fitting of diaphragm
IUD placement
Pulmonary function testing

Central line insertion
Arterial line insertion
Bier blocks
Port placement
Participate in cardiac catheterisation
Perform cardiac stress testing
Perinatal care
Antenatal ultrasound
Skin cancer removal
DEXA scanning
OGD

Pay:

Median pay for all PAs who work >30 hours per week and are not in a training post (regardless of specialty and length of experience) is £35,000. Mean pay for the same group of PAs is £35,148.

CPD

29 PAs received set funds for ongoing CPD. 48 indicated they are uncertain if there are funds allocated for their CPD. 6 indicated that they just ask for what they want and their supervisor or practice decides on a case-by-case basis. 34 state that there are no funds available for CPD expenses from their employer. Of those who receive funds, the mean, median and mode are all £500 per year (range £200 – 1000)

Study Leave

For those who received paid study leave, the most common number of paid days off for study leave was 5 (range of 2 – 14 days).

Managed Voluntary Register Dues

90 of the 126 PAs who answered this question were on the MVR. Of those PAs who are on the Managed Voluntary Register, only 1 has an employer who covers the whole cost. 1 has an employer who covers part of the cost. All other PAs on the MVR cover the cost themselves.

UKAPA Dues

Only 2 PAs have UKAPA dues fully covered by their employers. 2 PAs indicated UKAPA dues are partially covered by their employers. Last year, 3 indicated their dues were fully covered and 3 indicated their dues were partially covered. The rest of the PAs indicated that their employers do not fund UKAPA dues.

Limitations of our data

These data have several limitations. First, participants were allowed to opt out at any time in the survey, and some did, completing only partial surveys. Others did not answer individual questions, giving us shifting denominators. Second, some participants had difficulty generating a UCID (unique ID which will allow us to track individual career paths over time). This results in an inability to match annual census data with practice patterns data with data from previous census administrations. Third, sometimes conflicting answers are given and there is really no way to reconcile them in an anonymous survey administration. For example, people will say that they practice Emergency Medicine, but then do not choose A and E as their practice setting. Or they say they work in GP surgery as their setting, but do not choose General Practice as one of their specialties.

We had a worrying decline in student participation this year. Last year, 95% of students participated. This year, only 68.2% participated. Hopefully, we can increase this number again in 2015 as having baseline data on students is essential. I would encourage those working on PA courses to exhort their students to participate as a way to contribute to the forward progress of the profession.

However, overall, I do feel that the data reflect a fairly accurate snapshot of PA practice in the UK. We have already had a subset of this data (Scope of Practice in Emergency Medicine) accepted for the December 2014 edition of Clinical Medicine. We hope to publish at least 2 more papers based on the 2014 data. This data continues to be used by universities, students, workforce planners, the UKAPA / FoPAs, and doctor advocates for the PA role in a wide variety of settings. We could not continue to have up-to-date data to use for these purposes without your help. Thank you!

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