

Physician Assistants

SOC: 29-1071 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$133,260 Median Salary	162,700 Employment	+20.0% Growth Rate
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Master's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

7.3/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Communication skills, Compassion, Detail oriented, Emotional stability, Interpersonal skills, Problem-solving skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Physician Assistants (PAs) provide **medical care under the supervision of physicians and surgeons**. They examine patients, diagnose illnesses, develop treatment plans, prescribe medications, and assist in procedures. Their work is critical in healthcare delivery, patient management, and clinical support.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, patient interaction, and applying medical knowledge to diagnose and treat conditions.

What Do Physician Assistants Do?

These professionals evaluate patients, provide treatment, and support physicians in clinical and procedural care.

Common responsibilities include:

- Taking medical histories and performing physical examinations
- Ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests
- Diagnosing illnesses, injuries, or conditions
- Developing and managing patient treatment plans
- Prescribing medications within scope of practice
- Assisting in surgeries and medical procedures
- Educating patients on preventive care, health management, and wellness
- Maintaining patient records and collaborating with healthcare teams

Key Areas of Physician Assistant Practice

Physician assistants may focus on specific medical fields, patient populations, or procedures:

- Primary Care and Family Medicine: Managing routine healthcare needs and preventive services
- Surgical Assistance: Supporting operations and post-operative care
- Specialty Medicine: Working in fields such as cardiology, dermatology, or pediatrics
- Diagnostic and Treatment Planning: Assessing conditions and implementing care plans
- Patient Education and Wellness: Advising on lifestyle, preventive care, and health management

Skills and Abilities Needed

Physician assistants combine clinical knowledge, analytical skills, and patient care abilities.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires advanced education and clinical training:

- Bachelor's Degree (minimum): Pre-medical or science-focused field
- Accredited Physician Assistant Program: Graduate-level professional education
- Clinical Rotations: Hands-on experience in various medical specialties
- State Licensure: Required to practice as a physician assistant
- Certification (optional or required): National Board certification for PAs
- Continuing Education: Maintaining certification and staying current with medical practices

Where Do Physician Assistants Work?

They are employed in organizations that provide medical care and support:

- Hospitals and Medical Centers
- Outpatient Clinics and Physician Offices

- Specialty Practices
- Surgical and Emergency Care Facilities
- Government and Public Health Organizations

Work environments include clinics, hospitals, surgical suites, and outpatient facilities.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires medical knowledge, clinical judgment, and the ability to work under pressure. PAs must make accurate diagnoses, implement treatment plans, and collaborate effectively with healthcare teams.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy patient care and healthcare problem-solving
- Are detail-oriented and analytical
- Can work in collaborative, high-pressure environments
- Have strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Want a career providing essential healthcare services under physician supervision

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, chemistry, and health sciences
- Volunteer or intern in clinics, hospitals, or healthcare settings
- Develop communication, observation, and problem-solving skills
- Explore accredited physician assistant programs
- Gain hands-on experience through clinical rotations or shadowing healthcare professionals

Physician assistants provide critical medical care, assisting physicians in diagnosing, treating, and managing patient health to improve outcomes and support healthcare delivery.