



The Physician Assistant Marketplace
Results of the 1998 New York State PA Exit Survey



School of Public Health
University at Albany, State University of New York

THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT MARKETPLACE

Results of the 1998 New York State PA Exit Survey

October 1999

Center for Health Workforce Studies

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1998, the Center for Health Workforce Studies, in collaboration with the New York State Society of Physician Assistants, conducted the second annual *Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in New York State*. As in 1997, the interest and cooperation from the PA programs in New York State was excellent: 428 (82%) of the 522 graduates completed the survey.

Recent years have seen a dramatic growth in the demand and opportunities for PAs. The effective use of PAs can help constrain costs and increase access. There are a number of reasons to believe that the demand for PAs will continue to rise, including the continued expansion of managed care and concerns about controlling healthcare costs. The reduction of physicians in training in New York could also lead to an increase in demand for PAs at teaching hospitals as substitutes for residents.

While it is clear that demand for and use of PAs is continuing to rise, it is possible that the supply is growing even more rapidly and may exceed the demand: the number of physician assistant education programs and graduates in New York have increased significantly. In 1997, 12 programs graduated a total of 417 PAs in New York. In 1998, these same programs graduated 447 PAs, an increase of 7%. In addition, three new programs graduated their first class with a total of 75 graduates bringing the overall total to 522 graduates in 1998, a 25% increase over 1997.

In the absence of data describing the practice patterns of new PAs it is difficult to answer several basic questions: Is supply exceeding demand? Are practice patterns changing? Are job opportunities better in some practice settings or geographic areas in New York State? Are graduates experiencing difficulty finding practice opportunities? What percent of new PAs are going into primary care practice? And what percent are leaving the state?

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The *Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in New York State* was designed to help answer these questions. New PA graduates provide a picture of the balance between supply and demand in a region. If they are having a relatively easy time finding a job, then demand still exceeds the supply. Conversely, if new graduates are having a difficult time finding a job and have a negative view of the job market, this would provide evidence that the job market is becoming crowded. This may even be an indication that the supply of PAs is exceeding demand.

The primary goal of this study was to gain insight into the balance between supply and demand for physician assistants. Secondary objectives of the study included: developing a demographic profile of PA program graduates; determining where graduates would be practicing following graduation with regard to practice setting, geographic location and demographics; analyzing starting salary data; and assessing how these variables are related to demand for PAs.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey was distributed to each of the 15 PA programs in New York during the final week of class in 1998 with instructions to have their graduates complete and return the surveys as a group. This methodology was used to assure a high response rate. PA programs complete their training throughout the year; hence the survey was distributed and collected throughout 1998.

The survey consisted of 24 questions in five topical areas:

1. Demographics - gender, age, race and high school location (a proxy for state residency);
2. Educational/Work Background - including PA program from which the PA is graduating, prior health related education/training and/or experience, degree program the respondent is completing and highest degree earned prior to PA school;
3. Future Plans - primary activity (i.e. entering patient care, teaching/research, etc.) expected three months after graduation, expected geographic location and status of the job search;
4. Specific Plans (for those planning to enter patient care as a PA) - including the practice setting(s) in which the respondent would be employed, demographics of the practice location, expected gross income and method of compensation, number of hours per week respondent will be practicing, specialty of supervising physician, satisfaction with practice and compensation, and whether the position is viewed as temporary; and
5. Job Market Indicators - including whether the respondent had a difficult time finding a PA position or had to change plans due to limited job opportunities, number of job applications and offers; and view of the regional and national job markets.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Part I of this report presents the results of the 1998 survey for PA graduates of programs in the greater New York City area (including NYC, Long Island and Westchester County) in comparison to upstate New York (the rest of the state). Part II compares the overall results of the 1998 survey with those of the 1997 survey. Each part is divided into several sections corresponding to each of the topical areas described above.

Part II of this report presents several comparisons of 1998 results against those of 1997. We urge the reader to use caution in drawing conclusions based on these numbers due to the fact that several minor modifications were made to the survey instrument from 1997 to 1998 and because the three new programs contributed a significant number of graduates which could potentially bias the comparisons. We believe the 1998 data will provide a good baseline for trending the results of future year's surveys.

Copies of the survey instruments for both 1997 and 1998 are provided as Appendices.

HIGHLIGHTS

Almost all the graduates were planning to go directly into patient care (94% in 1997 and 97% in 1998) and the vast majority were planning to work in New York State (76%). The job market appears to be moderately tight. In 1998, only 34% had confirmed practice plans in the month prior to graduation; 56% reported “difficulty finding a job”; 28% had to “change their plans due to limited job opportunities”; 21% of the graduates perceived there to be “very few” or “no jobs” in their region.

While 73% of the 1998 graduates with confirmed practice plans were “very satisfied” with their practice plans and 31% were “very satisfied” with their starting compensation, this was down slightly from 76% and 38% respectively in 1997. On the other hand, the percent of graduates experiencing “difficulty finding a job” and the percent having to “change plans due to limited job opportunities” dropped from 62% to 57% and 34% to 28% respectively from 1997 to a 1998.

The job market appears to be a little tighter in upstate New York compared to the Greater New York City area. Of the 1998 graduates of programs located upstate, 32% had to change their plans due to limited job opportunities compared to 26% in Greater New York; and 25% perceived there were “very few” or “no jobs” compared to 19% in Greater New York. The median starting income was also higher in the Greater New York area: \$55,538 compared to \$52,426 upstate.

While historically, PAs have been viewed as going into primary care, only 26% of the 1998 graduates with confirmed plans were going into family practice, internal medicine or pediatrics practices; this was a decline from 35% in 1997. The strongest growth was in the area of surgical specialties, which increased from 24% in 1997 to 41% in 1998.

The practice plans for 1998 PAs in the Greater New York City area have some noteworthy differences from the upstate PA graduates. A higher percent from upstate are staying in the state (84% vs. 73%); a higher percent were going into practice in rural areas (14% vs. 7%); and a much higher percent were going to practice in physicians offices (56% vs. 26% in 1998) and into primary care specialties (43% vs. 19%).

FINDINGS

Demographic Characteristics of All Respondents

- Sixty percent (60%) of respondents were female. Sixteen percent (16%) were minorities but this proportion was significantly higher in greater NY (20%) than upstate (6%).
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents resided in NYS at high school graduation. About one-fifth (19%) completed high school in other states and nine percent (9%) were foreigners.
- The average age of respondents was 30.6 with a median of 29.0. Upstate respondents were older than those from greater NY (median of 32.0 vs. 28.0, respectively).

- Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents were completing a bachelor's degree (including those earning a certificate of completion and bachelor's simultaneously) while another twenty-eight percent (28%) were earning only a certificate of completion.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents had earned at least a bachelor's degree prior to PA school. Nearly one-fifth (18%) had only a high school diploma.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents had some health related experience prior to entering their PA program. Of those with experience, the most common responses were EMT (19%), medical technician/technologist (13%), and LPN/nursing assistant (10%).
- Of the 428 survey respondents, 409 (97%) were planning to enter patient care as a PA after graduation. Of those indicating they had searched for a position, forty-five percent (45%) had found a position, but this percentage was lower (38%) for upstate NY respondents.

Characteristics of Upcoming Position for Respondents with Confirmed Plans to Enter Patient Care as a Physician Assistant

- Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents were starting jobs within New York State. This proportion was even higher (84%) for upstate respondents.
- There were significant differences in the demographics of the respondents' practice location by region. Upstate respondents were more likely to be practicing in rural (14% vs. 7%) or small city (14% vs. 4%) locations than their GNY counterparts. In contrast, more than one-half (52%) of GNY respondents were going to inner city locations vs. less than one-third (29%) of upstate respondents.
- Practice setting also varied by region. Over two-thirds (68%) of GNY respondents were entering hospital based practices, and the majority of these (72%) were entering inpatient settings. Upstate respondents were more evenly distributed between hospitals (33%), solo physician practices (31%), and group physician practices (25%).
- Three-quarters (75%) of GNY respondents indicated that the specialty of their supervising physician was a non-primary care specialty. Sixty-two percent of these (62%) were reported their supervising physician to be a general surgeon (39%) or surgical subspecialist (23%). Upstate respondents were more evenly distributed between primary care (43%) and non-primary care (54%) practices.

Income and Satisfaction with Practice Plans-Respondents with Confirmed Plans to Enter Patient Care as a Physician Assistant

- While nearly every respondent was either "very" (73%) or "somewhat satisfied" (26%) with their upcoming practice, one-third (34%) expected to remain in their job less than three years.
- Nearly all respondents (97%) were entering salaried positions and almost one-half (47%) were receiving some level of incentive.

- The majority (59%) of respondents' starting salaries were in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range. Starting salaries of GNY respondents were somewhat higher than respondents from upstate (median of \$55,538 vs. \$52,426, respectively).
- The vast majority (86%) of respondents were either "very" (31%) or "somewhat satisfied" (55%) with their starting salary.

Job Market Perceptions and Experience of All Respondents

- More than one-half (56%) of respondents reported "difficulty finding a PA position" and this proportion was nearly the same for upstate and GNY. However, the "main reason for difficulty" perceived by respondents varied by region. GNY respondents were more likely to attribute their difficulty to a "lack of jobs for PAs with little or no experience" (24% in GNY vs. 13% upstate). Upstate respondents were more likely to report difficulty due to a "lack of jobs in desired geographic locations" (18% upstate vs. 12% in GNY).
- On average, respondents received 1.42 PA employment offers and upstate respondents received a few more offers (1.54 vs. 1.36) than respondents in GNY.
- Overall, twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents indicated that they had to "change their plans to due limited PA job opportunities". This rate was higher for upstate respondents, where nearly one-third (32%) of respondents had to change plans, than for GNY respondents (26%).
- GNY respondents had a considerably more positive outlook on the job market in their region than did their upstate counterparts. For GNY respondents, over two-fifths (44%) felt their were either "Many Jobs" or "Some Jobs" within 50 miles of their PA school as compared to thirty-percent (30%) of upstate respondents. Furthermore, less than one-fifth (18%) of GNY respondents felt there were "Very Few" or "No Jobs" compared to one-quarter (25%) of upstate respondents.
- Upstate respondents had a slightly more positive view of the national job market than did GNY respondents. Eighty-five percent (85%) of upstate respondents felt there were "Many Jobs" (33%) or "Some Jobs" (52%) for PAs nationally.

PART A

**Regional Comparison of PA Programs in Greater New York
(New York City, Long Island and Westchester County) to
Programs in Upstate New York (All Other NYS Programs)**

Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS

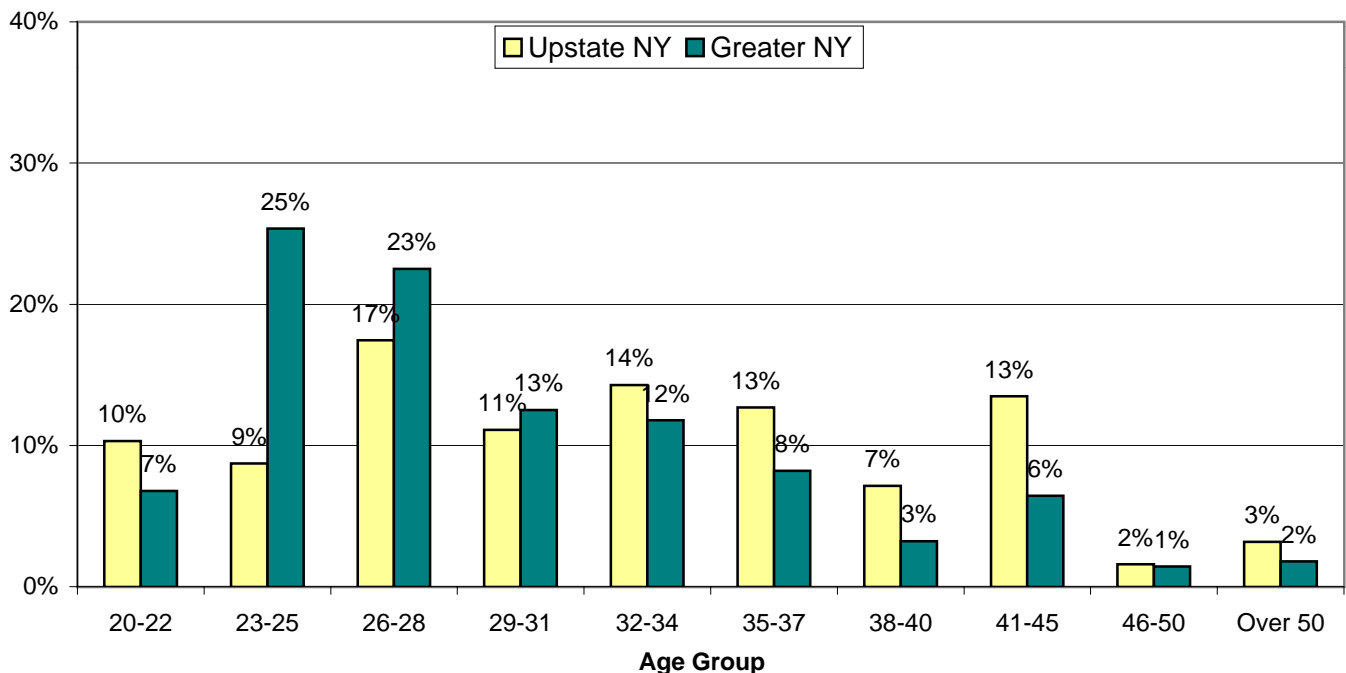
PART A. Regional Comparison of Programs in Greater New York (New York City, Long Island and Westchester County) to Upstate New York (All Other NYS Programs)

SECTION A-1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

A-1.1 Response Rates	<u>Upstate NY</u>	<u>Greater NY</u>	<u>NYS Total</u>
Number of Respondents (n) =	130	298	428
Number of Graduates (N) =	150	372	522
Response Rate (n / N) =	87%	80%	82%

A-1.2 Demographic Characteristics		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Gender	Male	55	42%	115	39%	170	40%
	Female	75	58%	177	61%	252	60%
Race	White	118	92%	207	71%	325	78%
	Under-represented Minority*	8	6%	58	20%	66	16%
	Other	2	2%	26	9%	28	7%
High School Location	New York State	106	82%	199	67%	305	72%
	Other U.S.	23	18%	60	20%	83	19%
	Other Country	1	1%	37	13%	38	9%

Age Distribution of Graduating PAs



	<u>Upstate NY</u>	<u>Greater NY</u>	<u>NYS Total</u>
Number of Respondents =	126	280	406
Mean =	32.5	29.8	30.6
Median =	32.0	28.0	29.0

*Includes Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino & Native American.

Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS
PART A. Regional Comparison of Programs in Greater New York (New York City, Long Island and Westchester County) to Upstate New York (All Other NYS Programs)

SECTION A-1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

A-1.3 Educational Background		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Degree Responding is Completing	Certificate of Completion	31	24%	90	30%	121	28%
	Associate's	26	20%	0	0%	26	6%
	Bachelor's	73	56%	206	70%	279	65%
Highest Degree Earned Prior to PA School	High School Diploma	19	15%	57	19%	76	18%
	Associate's	25	19%	48	16%	73	17%
	Bachelor's	74	57%	166	56%	240	56%
	Master's	12	9%	21	7%	33	8%
	Doctorate	0	0%	4	1%	4	1%

A-1.4 Health Related Experience Prior to PA School		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Respondent's Experience in a Health Occupation Prior to PA School*	None	27	21%	95	32%	122	29%
	Emergency Medical Tech (EMT)	37	28%	45	15%	82	19%
	LPN/Nursing Assistant	19	15%	25	8%	44	10%
	Registered Nurse (RN)	6	5%	3	1%	9	2%
	Medical Technician/Technologist	16	12%	38	13%	54	13%
	PT, OT or RT	10	8%	13	4%	23	5%
	Physician Training	0	0%	2	1%	2	0%
	Military	11	8%	7	2%	18	4%
	Other	41	32%	91	31%	132	31%
Number of Years of Prior Health Occupation Experience	Zero	27	21%	95	31%	122	28%
	Less than 1 year	5	4%	40	13%	45	10%
	1 - 2 Years	13	10%	57	19%	70	16%
	3 - 5 Years	31	24%	65	21%	96	22%
	6 - 10 Years	30	23%	34	11%	64	15%
	11 - 15 Years	11	8%	10	3%	21	5%
	Over 15 Years	13	10%	7	2%	20	5%
	Average # of Years		5.8		2.9		3.8

A-1.5 Post Graduation Plans		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Planned Activity 3 Months After Grad & Status of Job Search	Patient Care as a PA	125	96%	284	97%	409	97%
	<i>Found PA Position**</i>	38	29%	104	36%	142	34%
	<i>PA Position <u>Not</u> Found Yet</i>	63	48%	113	39%	176	42%
	<i>Have Not Searched Yet</i>	20	15%	58	20%	78	18%
	<i>Status of Job Search Unknown</i>	4	3%	9	3%	13	3%
	Other Activity	5	4%	8	3%	13	3%

* This was a multiple response question. For this reason percentages may sum to a value greater than 100%.

**Section 2 is based on these respondents (ie. those with confirmed plans to enter patient care as a PA).

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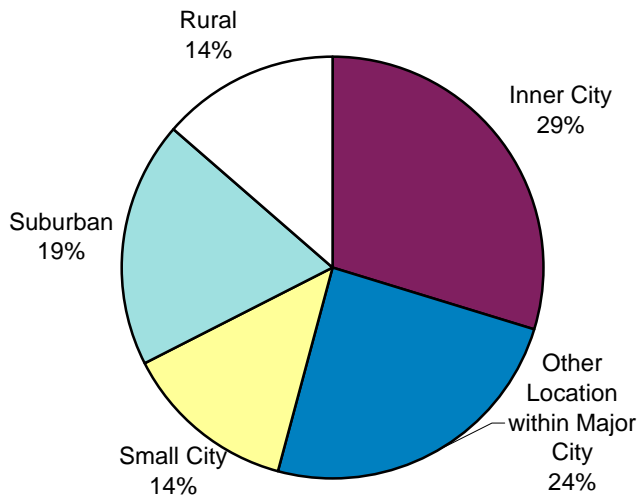
SECTION A-2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

A-2.1 Location of Upcoming Practice

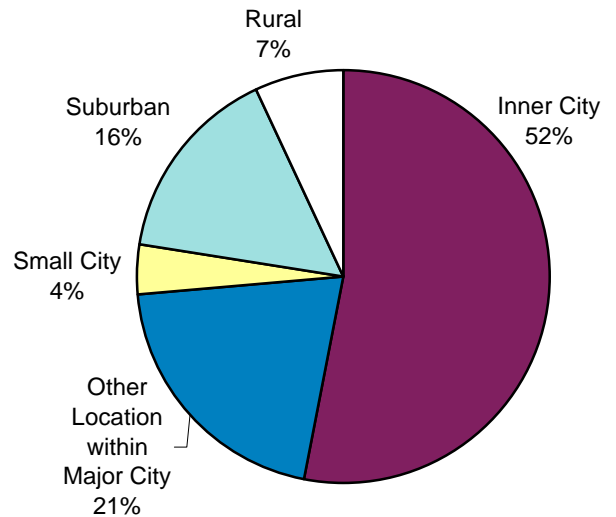
Practice Location	<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
New York State	32	84%	76	73%	108	76%
<i>Same City/County</i>	23	61%	45	43%	68	48%
<i>Same Region</i>	5	13%	28	27%	33	23%
<i>Other Area of NYS</i>	4	11%	3	3%	7	5%
Other U.S. Location	6	16%	28	27%	34	24%

Demographics of Practice Location

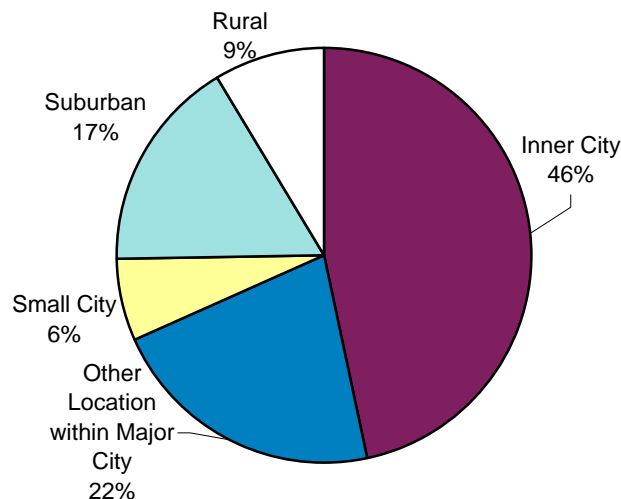
Upstate NY



Greater NY



NYS Total



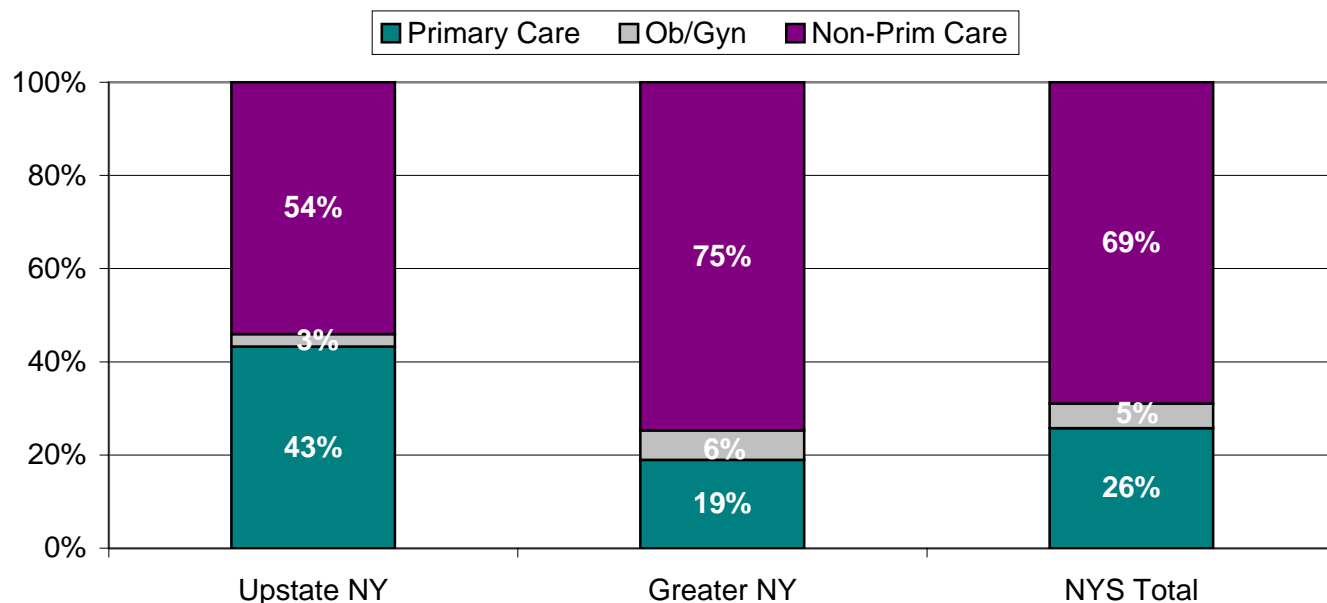
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SECTION A-2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

A-2.2 Characteristics of Upcoming Practice

		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Principal Practice Setting	Physician Practice - Solo	11	31%	8	8%	19	14%
	Physician Practice - Group	9	25%	18	18%	27	20%
	Hospital	12	33%	69	68%	81	59%
	<i>Inpatient</i>	6	17%	50	49%	56	41%
	<i>Ambulatory Care</i>	2	6%	7	7%	9	7%
	<i>Emergency Room</i>	4	11%	12	12%	16	12%
	Diagnostic & Treatment Center	1	3%	6	6%	7	5%
	Other	3	8%	1	1%	4	3%
Specialty of Supervising Physician	Primary Care	16	43%	18	19%	34	26%
	<i>General/Family Practice</i>	6	16%	12	13%	18	14%
	<i>Internal Medicine-General</i>	8	22%	5	5%	13	10%
	<i>Pediatrics-General</i>	2	5%	1	1%	3	2%
	Obstetrics & Gynecology	1	3%	6	6%	7	5%
	Non-Primary Care	20	54%	71	75%	91	69%
	<i>Internal Medicine-Subspecialty</i>	5	14%	5	5%	10	8%
	<i>Emergency Medicine</i>	4	11%	12	13%	16	12%
	<i>Pediatric Subspecialty</i>	0	0%	4	4%	4	3%
	<i>Surgery-General</i>	1	3%	17	18%	18	14%
<i>Orthopedic Surgery</i>	4	11%	10	11%	14	11%	
<i>Other Surgical Subspecialty</i>	4	11%	17	18%	21	16%	
<i>Other Specialty</i>	2	5%	6	6%	8	6%	

Distribution of Specialty Group of Respondent's Supervising Physician



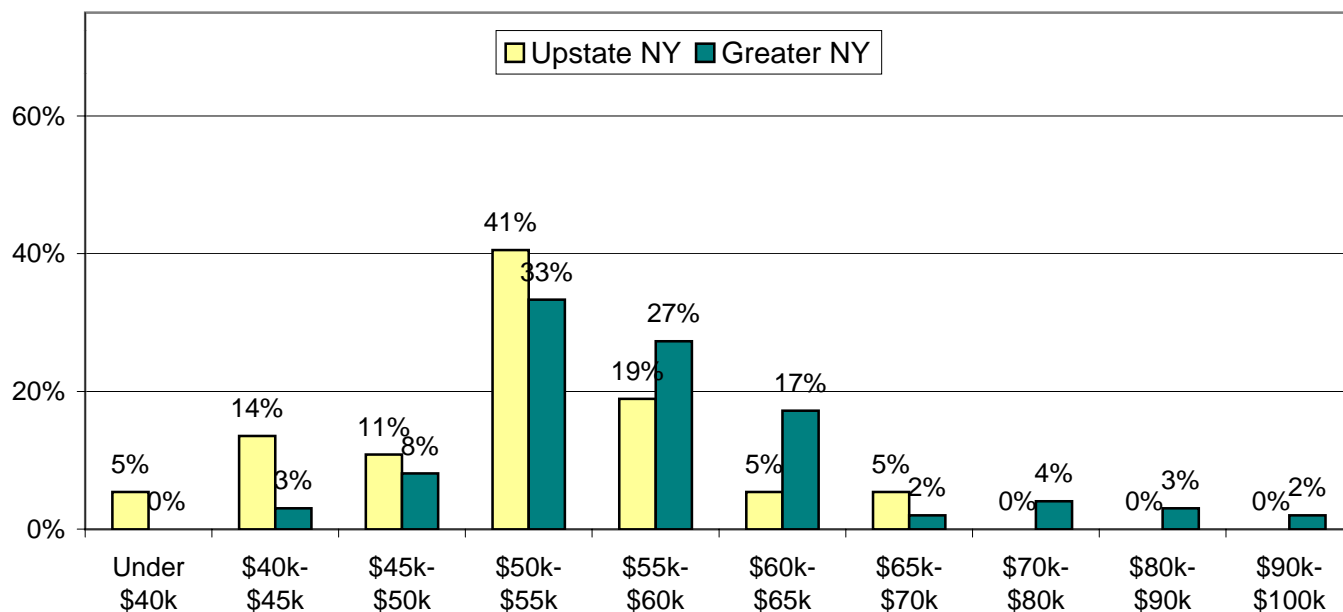
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SECTION A-2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

A-2.3 Satisfaction with Practice Plans		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Satisfaction with Upcoming Practice	Very Satisfied	29	81%	72	70%	101	73%
	Somewhat Satisfied	7	19%	29	28%	36	26%
	Not Too Satisfied	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Very Dissatisfied	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
Does Respondent Plan to be at Current Job Less Than 3 Years	Yes	10	26%	38	37%	48	34%
	No	28	74%	66	63%	94	66%

A-2.4 Income Characteristics		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Method of Compensation at Upcoming Practice	Salary (<i>without</i> Incentive)	18	50%	49	49%	67	50%
	Salary with Incentive	16	44%	48	48%	64	47%
	Fee for Service	2	6%	1	1%	3	2%
	Other	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
Satisfaction with Starting Income/ Compensation	Very Satisfied	12	32%	30	30%	42	31%
	Somewhat Satisfied	21	55%	55	56%	76	55%
	Not Too Satisfied	4	11%	13	13%	17	12%
	Very Dissatisfied	1	3%	1	1%	2	1%

Distribution of Starting Income



	<u>Upstate NY</u>	<u>Greater NY</u>	<u>NYS Total</u>
Number of Respondents =	37	99	136
Mean =	\$51,505	\$57,871	\$56,139
Median =	\$52,426	\$55,538	\$54,568

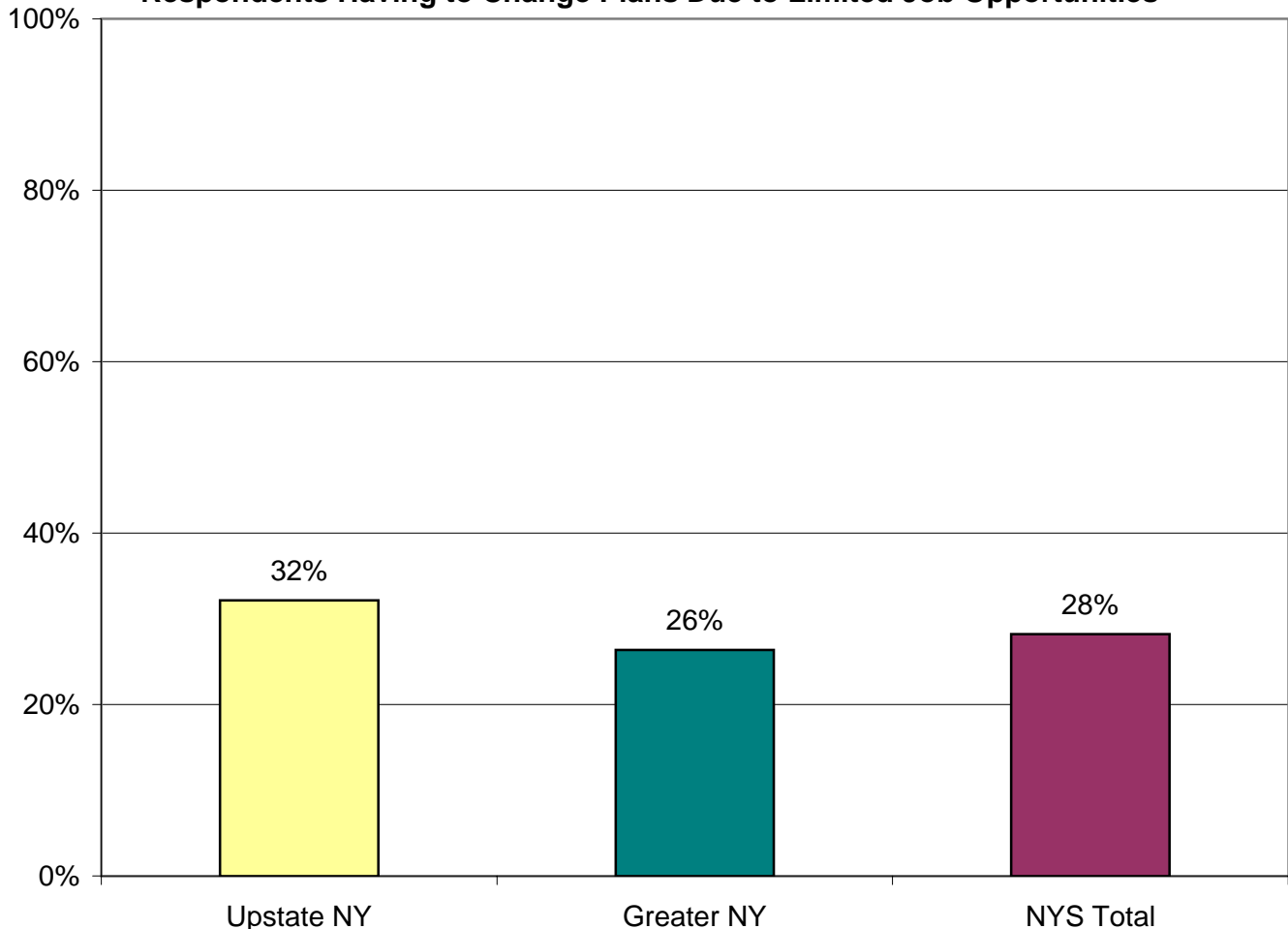
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PART A. Regional Comparison of Programs in Greater New York (New York City, Long Island and Westchester County) to Upstate New York (All Other NYS Programs)**

SECTION A-3. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

A-3.1 Respondent's Experience in Searching for a PA Position

Did Resp Have Difficulty Finding a Job & If Yes, Main Reason for the Difficulty	Upstate NY		Greater NY		NYS Total	
Yes	45	54%	107	57%	152	56%
R Overall Lack of Jobs for PAs	8	10%	18	10%	26	10%
e Lack of Jobs for PAs w/ Little or No Experience	11	13%	45	24%	56	21%
a Lack of Jobs in Desired Geographic Locations	15	18%	23	12%	38	14%
s Lack of Jobs in Desired Practice Settings	4	5%	9	5%	13	5%
o Inadequate Salary/Compensation Offered	1	1%	1	1%	2	1%
n Other	0	0%	7	4%	7	3%
s Unknown--Reason Not Specified	6	7%	4	2%	10	4%
No	39	46%	80	43%	119	44%
Average # of PA Employment Offers =	1.54		1.36		1.42	
Average # of PA Employment Applications =	8.14		7.88		7.96	
(Ave # of Offers) / (Ave # of Applications) =	0.19		0.17		0.18	

Respondents Having to Change Plans Due to Limited Job Opportunities



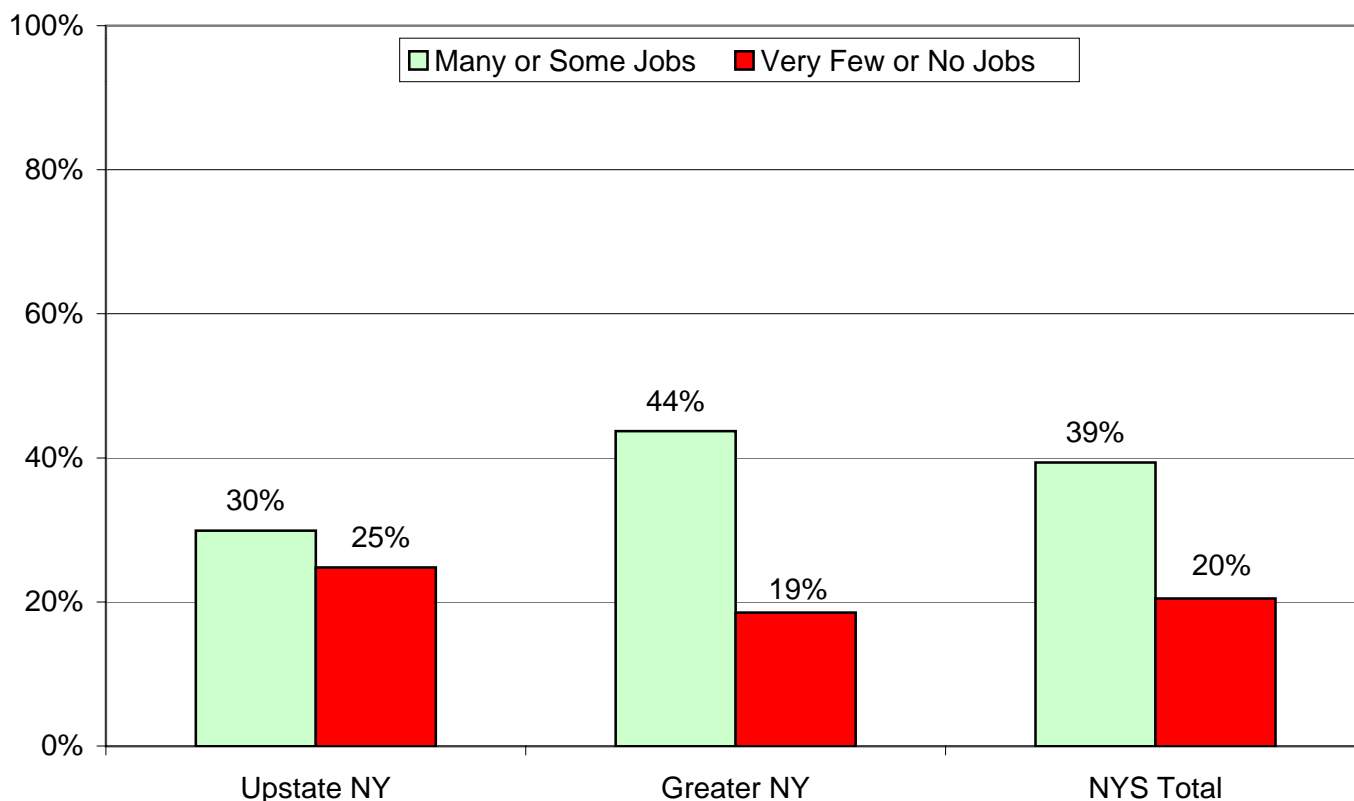
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SECTION A-3. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

A-3.2 Respondent's Perceptions of Practice Opportunities for PAs

		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Perceptions of the <i>Regional</i> Job Market for PAs¹	Many Jobs	1	1%	11	4%	12	3%
	Some Jobs	34	29%	100	39%	134	36%
	Few Jobs	53	45%	96	38%	149	40%
	Very Few Jobs	29	25%	44	17%	73	20%
	No Jobs	0	0%	3	1%	3	1%
<i>Likert Score²</i>		0.06		0.28		0.21	

Proportion of Respondent's with Positive and Negative View of the Job Market for PAs in the Region



		<u>Upstate NY</u>		<u>Greater NY</u>		<u>NYS Total</u>	
Perceptions of the <i>National</i> Job Market for PAs	Many Jobs	40	33%	63	24%	103	27%
	Some Jobs	63	52%	144	55%	207	54%
	Few Jobs	14	12%	44	17%	58	15%
	Very Few Jobs	4	3%	10	4%	14	4%
	No Jobs	0	0%	2	1%	2	1%
<i>Likert Score²</i>		1.15		0.97		1.03	

¹ The Region was defined as "within 50 miles of the location of the respondent's PA program".

² Likert Score computed using the following point system: "Many Jobs" = +2, "Some Jobs" = +1, "Few Jobs" = 0, "Very Few Jobs" = -1, "No Jobs" = -2.

PART B

Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates

Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS

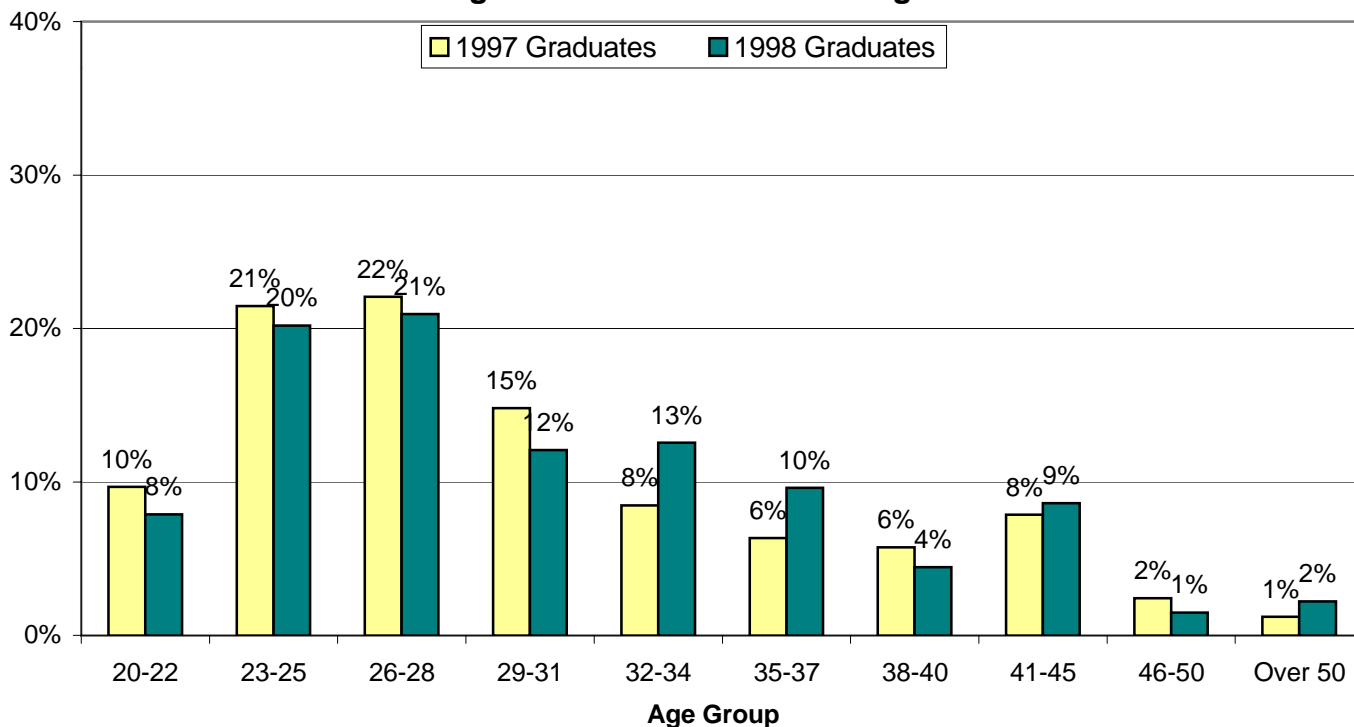
PART B. Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates

SECTION B-1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

B-1.1 Response Rates	<u>1997 Graduates</u>	<u>1998 Graduates</u>	<u>Difference (1998 - 1997)</u>
Number of Respondents (n) =	351	428	77
Number of Graduates (N) =	417	522	105
Response Rate (n / N) =	84%	82%	-2%

B-1.2 Demographic Characteristics		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference (% '98 - % '97)</u>
Gender	Male	127	36%	170	40%	4%
	Female	221	64%	252	60%	-4%
Race	White	258	75%	325	78%	3%
	Under-represented Minority*	54	16%	66	16%	0%
	Other	34	10%	28	7%	-3%
High School Location	New York State	251	72%	305	72%	0%
	Other U.S.	65	19%	83	19%	0%
	Other Country	31	9%	38	9%	0%

Age Distribution of Graduating PAs



	<u>1997 Graduates</u>	<u>1998 Graduates</u>	<u>Difference (1998 - 1997)</u>
Mean =	30.0	30.6	0.6
Median =	28.0	29.0	1.0

*Includes Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino & Native American.

Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS PART B. Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates

SECTION B-1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

B-1.3 Educational Background & Health Related Experience Prior to PA School		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference (% '98 - % '97)</u>
Highest Degree Earned Prior to PA School	High School Diploma	55	16%	76	18%	2%
	Associate's	68	19%	73	17%	-2%
	Bachelor's	207	59%	240	56%	-3%
	Master's or Higher	20	6%	37	9%	3%
Respondent's Experience in a Health Occupation Prior to PA School*	None	119	34%	122	29%	-5%
	Emergency Medical Tech (EMT)	70	20%	82	19%	-1%
	LPN/Nursing Assistant	28	8%	44	10%	2%
	Registered Nurse (RN)	10	3%	9	2%	-1%
	PT, OT or RT	11	3%	23	5%	2%
	Physician Training	8	2%	2	0%	-2%
	Military	14	4%	18	4%	0%
	Other	122	35%	186	43%	8%

B-1.4 Post Graduation Plans		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference</u>
Patient Care as a PA		325	94%	409	97%	3%
Other Activity		22	6%	13	3%	-3%

* This was a multiple response question. For this reason percentages may sum to a value greater than 100%.

SECTION 2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

B-2.1 Location of Upcoming Practice		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference (% '98 - % '97)</u>
Practice Location	New York State	106	79%	108	76%	-2%
	Same City/County	56	41%	68	48%	7%
	Same Region	40	30%	33	23%	-7%
	Other Area of NYS	10	7%	7	5%	-2%
	Other U.S. Location	29	21%	34	24%	3%
Demo-graphics of Practice Location	Inner City	50	38%	65	47%	9%
	Other Location within Major City	29	22%	30	22%	0%
	Small City (Pop. < 50,000)	15	11%	9	6%	-5%
	Suburban	30	23%	23	17%	-6%
	Rural	9	7%	12	9%	2%

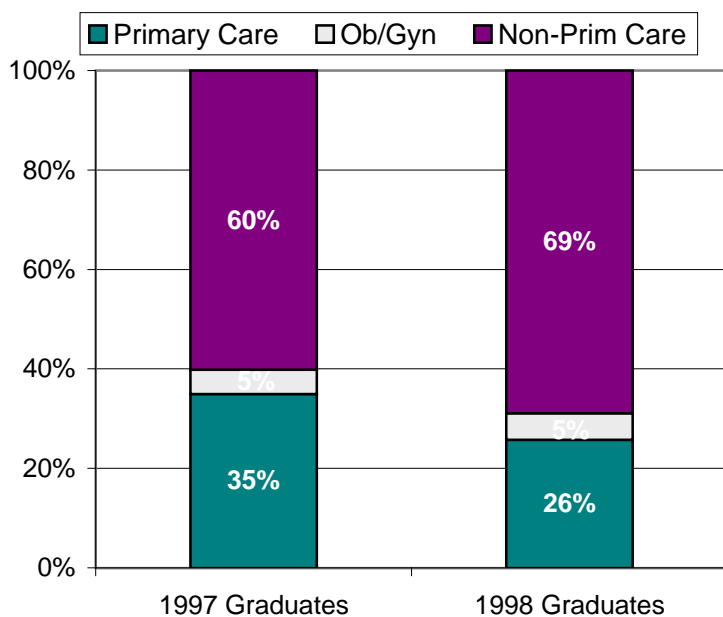
Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS

PART B. Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates

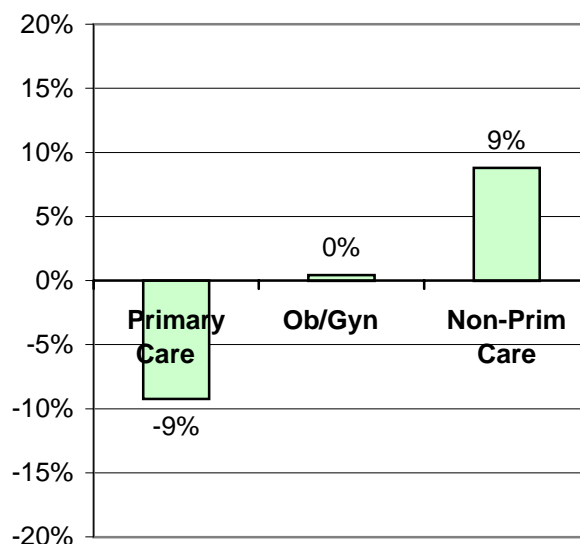
SECTION B-2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

B-2.2 Characteristics of Upcoming Practice		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference</u> <u>(% '98 - % '97)</u>
Principal Practice Setting	Physician Practice - Solo	14	10%	19	14%	4%
	Physician Practice - Group	31	23%	27	20%	-3%
	Hospital	78	57%	81	59%	2%
	<i>Inpatient</i>	48	35%	56	41%	6%
	<i>Ambulatory Care</i>	7	5%	9	7%	2%
	<i>Emergency Room</i>	23	17%	16	12%	-5%
	Diagnostic & Treatment Center	6	4%	7	5%	1%
	Other	7	5%	4	3%	-2%
Specialty of Supervising Physician	Primary Care	43	35%	34	26%	-9%
	<i>General/Family Practice</i>	28	23%	18	14%	-9%
	<i>Internal Medicine-General</i>	10	8%	13	10%	2%
	<i>Pediatrics-General</i>	5	4%	3	2%	-2%
	Obstetrics & Gynecology	6	5%	7	5%	0%
	Non-Primary Care	74	60%	91	69%	9%
	<i>Internal Medicine-Subspecialty</i>	7	6%	10	8%	2%
	<i>Emergency Medicine</i>	24	20%	16	12%	-8%
	<i>Pediatric Subspecialty</i>	4	3%	4	3%	0%
	<i>Surgery-General</i>	7	6%	18	14%	8%
	<i>Orthopedic Surgery</i>	9	7%	14	11%	4%
<i>Other Surgical Subspecialty</i>	13	11%	21	16%	5%	
<i>Other Specialty</i>	10	8%	8	6%	-2%	

Distribution of Specialty Group of Respondent's Supervising Physician



Change in Distribution of Specialty Group of Respondent's Supervising Physician (% '98 - %'97)



Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS

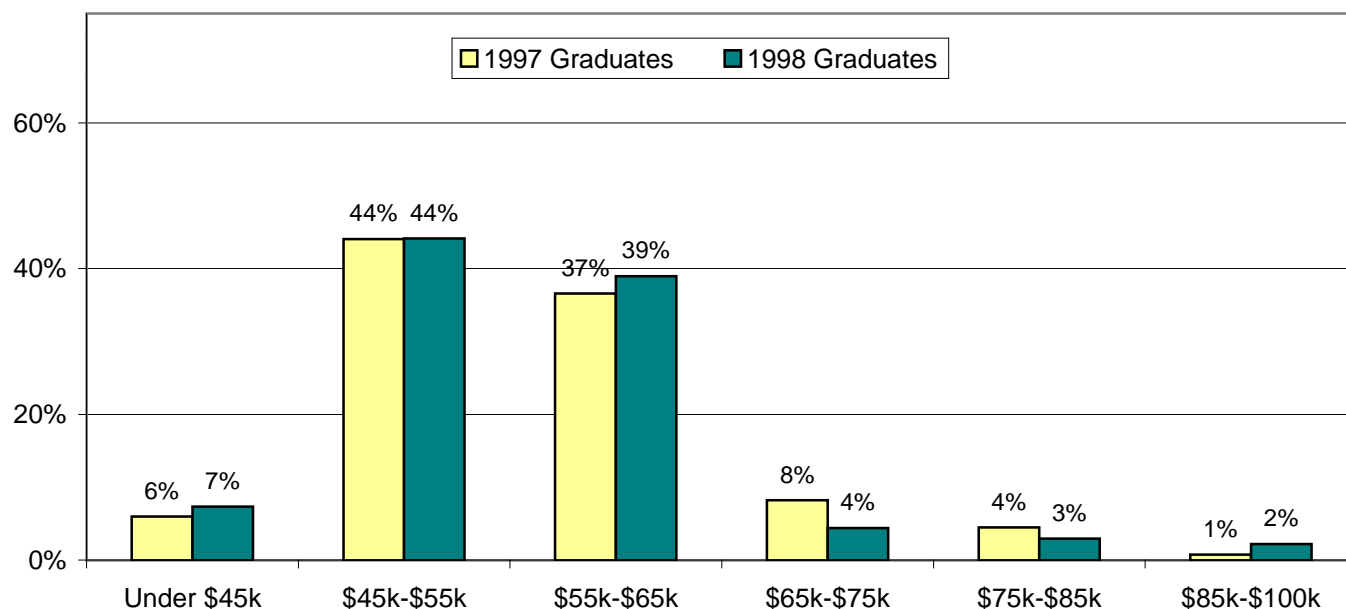
PART B. Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates

SECTION B-2. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO RESPONDENTS WITH CONFIRMED PLANS TO ENTER PATIENT CARE AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

B-2.3 Satisfaction with Practice Plans		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference</u> <u>(% '98 - % '97)</u>
Satisfaction with Upcoming Practice	Very Satisfied	98	76%	101	73%	-3%
	Somewhat Satisfied	28	22%	36	26%	4%
	Not Too Satisfied	3	2%	0	0%	-2%
	Very Dissatisfied	0	0%	2	1%	1%
Does Respondent Plan to be at Current Job Less Than 3 Years	Yes	45	35%	48	34%	-1%
	No	85	65%	94	66%	1%

B-2.4 Income Characteristics		<u>1997 Graduates</u>		<u>1998 Graduates</u>		<u>Difference</u> <u>(% '98 - % '97)</u>
Method of Compensation at Upcoming Practice	Salary (<i>without</i> Incentive)	72	56%	67	50%	-6%
	Salary with Incentive	52	41%	64	47%	6%
	Fee for Service	3	2%	3	2%	0%
	Other	1	1%	1	1%	0%
Satisfaction with Starting Income/ Compensation	Very Satisfied	50	38%	42	31%	-7%
	Somewhat Satisfied	60	46%	76	55%	9%
	Not Too Satisfied	19	15%	17	12%	-3%
	Very Dissatisfied	2	2%	2	1%	-1%

Distribution of Starting Income



	<u>1997 Graduates</u>	<u>1998 Graduates</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Number of Respondents =	134	136	2
Mean =	\$56,418	\$56,139	-\$279
Median =	\$55,000	\$54,568	-\$433

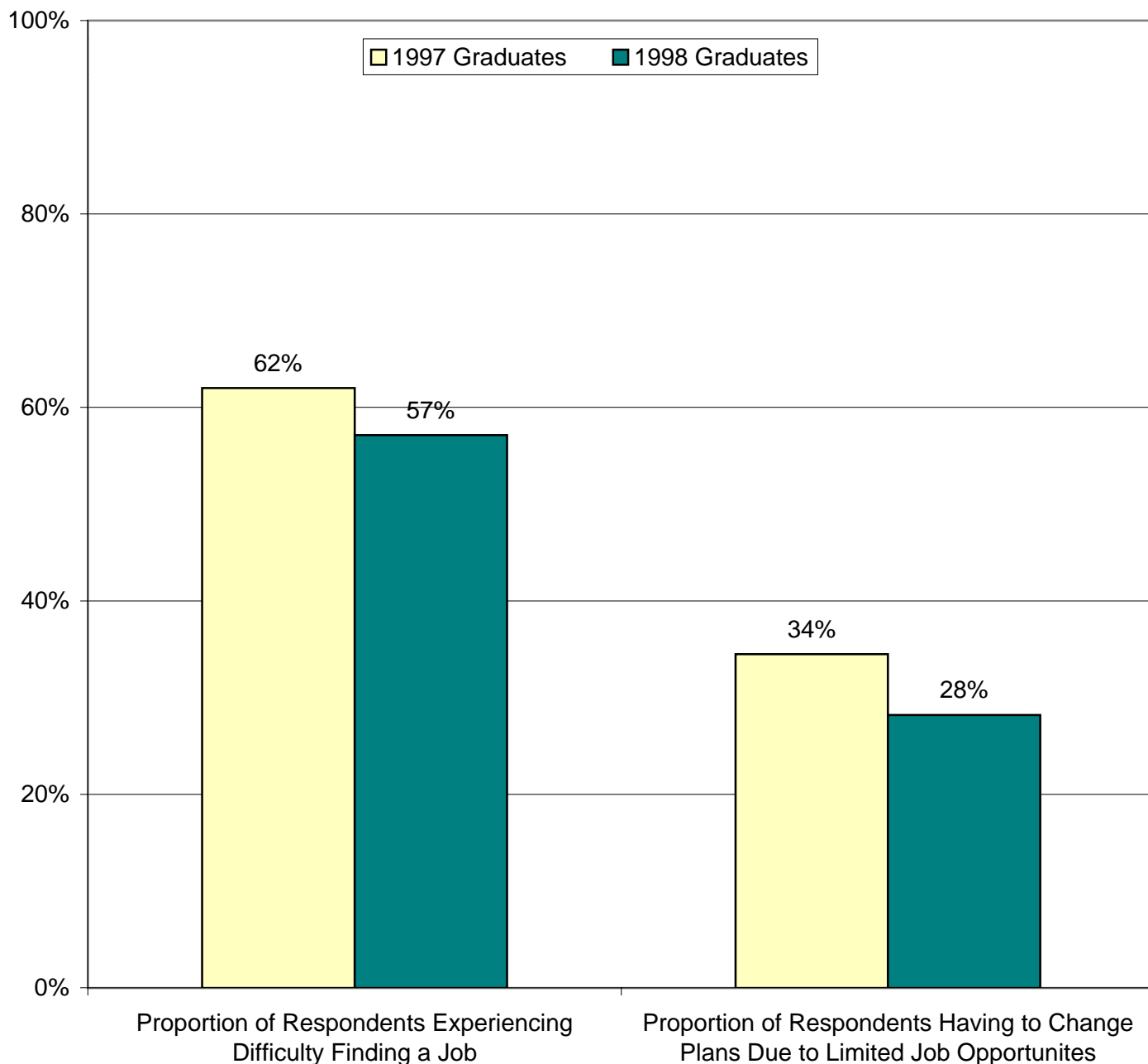
**Results of 1998 Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in NYS
PART B. Comparison of Responses of 1998 Graduates to 1997 Graduates**

SECTION B-3. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ALL RESPONDENTS

B-3.1 Respondent's Experience in Searching for a PA Position

	<u>1997 Graduates</u>	<u>1998 Graduates</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Average # of PA Employment Offers =	1.39	1.42	0.03

Respondents Experiencing Difficulty Finding a Job and Having to Change Plans Due to Limited Job Opportunities



APPENDIX

1998 PA Exit Survey Instrument

- Use a No. 2 pencil or blue or black ink pen only.
- Do not use pens with ink that soaks through the paper.
- Make solid marks that fill the oval completely.
- Make no stray marks on this form.
- Do not fold, tear, or mutilate this form.

CORRECT

INCORRECT

Survey of Graduating Physician Assistants in New York State

Center for Health Workforce Studies
University at Albany, School of Public Health
and

The New York State Society of Physician Assistants

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information on the plans and job market for new Physician Assistants. Your responses are anonymous and will be used for analytical purposes only.

For each question *mark only one answer* unless otherwise directed.

A. BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION

- 1.** Physician Assistant program from which you are graduating:
- Albany-Hudson Valley
 - Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center
 - The Brooklyn Hospital Center/Long Island University
 - Catholic Medical Center of Brooklyn & Queens
 - CUNY-Harlem Hospital
 - Cornell University Medical College
 - Daemen College
 - D'Youville College
 - LeMoyne College
 - Rochester Institute of Technology
 - Sisters of Charity Medical Center in Staten Island
 - SUNY at Brooklyn
 - SUNY at Stony Brook
 - Touro College
 - Wagner College/Staten Island University Hospital

- 2.** What degree program(s) are you completing: *(mark all that apply)*
- Certificate of Completion
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Associate's Degree
 - Master's Degree

3. Gender:

- Male
- Female

4. Age:

①	①
②	②
③	③
④	④
⑤	⑤
⑥	⑥
⑦	⑦
⑧	⑧
⑨	⑨

5. Race/Ethnicity:

- Native American/Alaskan
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black/African American (Not Hispanic)
- Hispanic/Latino (Puerto Rican)
- Hispanic/Latino (All Other)
- White (Not Hispanic/Latino)
- Other

6. Where was your residence on graduation from high school:

- New York State
- Canada
- Other U.S.
- Other Country

7. Did you have experience in a health occupation prior to becoming a PA *(mark all that apply)*:

- None (Skip to #9)
- PT, OT, or RT
- EMT
- Physician Training
- LPN/Nursing Assistant
- Military
- RN
- Medical Assistant
- Medical Technician/Technologist
- Not Able to Classify: _____

8. How many years of experience do you have in the health occupation(s) specified in question #7:

- Less than 1 year
- 6-10 years
- 1-2 years
- 11-15 years
- 3-5 years
- Over 15 years

9. Highest degree earned prior to entering a PA program:

- High School Diploma
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree

continue . . . Page 1



PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

SERIAL #

B. FUTURE PLANS

10. What do you expect to be doing 3 months after graduating from your Physician Assistant program:

Primary Activity (mark only one)

- Patient Care as a **Physician Assistant**
- Patient Care as **Another Health Care Provider**—(specify): _____
- Teaching or Research
- Temporarily Out of Workforce (e.g., family/personal reasons)
- Planning to work in Non-Medical Field
- Not Able to Classify

11. Where is the location of your primary activity after training:

- Same City/County as Current Training
- Same Region within New York State—but Different City/County
- Other Area within New York State
- Other State
- Outside of U.S.

If you are not going into Patient Care as a PA after graduation—Skip to Part D.

12. Have you begun searching for a practice position as a physician assistant yet:

- Yes
- No (**Skip to Part D**)

IF YES, have you been able to find a position as a physician assistant:

- Yes
- No (**Skip to Part D**)

C. SPECIFIC PLANS

If you are going into Patient Care and have found a position as a Physician Assistant

13. Which best describes the type of Patient Care Practice you will be entering:

- | <u>Principal Practice Setting</u>
(mark only one) | <u>Secondary Practice Setting(s)</u>
(mark all that apply) |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Solo Physician Practice |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Physician Group Practice |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Hospital—Inpatient |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Hospital—Ambulatory Care |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Hospital—Emergency Room |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Freestanding Health Center or Clinic |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> HMO |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Urgent Care Clinic |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Military |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> State or Local Health Department |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Private Industry |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Nursing Home |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Temporary Agency |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Not Able to Classify: _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> Undecided (Skip to Part D) |

14. Are you satisfied with the principal practice specified in question #13:

- Yes, Very Satisfied
- Yes, Somewhat Satisfied
- No, Not Too Satisfied
- No, Very Dissatisfied

15. Do you expect to be at the principal practice specified in question #13 for 4 or more years:

- Yes
- No

16. Which best describes the demographics of the area in which you will be practicing:

- Inner City
- Other Area within Major City
- Suburban
- Small City (population less than 50,000)
- Rural

17. What is the zip code of the principal practice address at which you will be working (if zip is unknown, please give city/town and state):

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

City/Town

--	--

State

0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

← Principal Practice Zip Code

18. How will you be compensated at your principal practice?

- Salary without Incentive
- Salary with Incentive
- Fee for Service
- Other (specify): _____

19. In your upcoming position, how many hours per week will you be working as a PA:

- Less than 10
- 10 to 19
- 20 to 29
- 30 to 39
- 40 to 49
- 50 or more

20. What will your gross yearly income be as a Physician Assistant during your first year of practice:

- Less than \$ 30,000
- \$ 30,000–\$ 34,999
- \$ 35,000–\$ 39,999
- \$ 40,000–\$ 44,999
- \$ 45,000–\$ 49,999
- \$ 50,000–\$ 54,999
- \$ 55,000–\$ 59,999
- \$ 60,000–\$ 64,999
- \$ 65,000–\$ 69,999
- \$ 70,000–\$ 74,999
- \$ 75,000–\$ 79,999
- \$ 80,000–\$ 84,999
- \$ 85,000–\$ 89,999
- \$ 90,000–\$ 94,999
- \$ 95,000–\$100,999
- Over \$100,000

21. Are you satisfied with your expected salary/compensation:

- Yes, Very Satisfied
- Yes, Somewhat Satisfied
- No, Not Too Satisfied
- No, Very Dissatisfied

22. What is the principal specialty of your supervising physician at the principal practice specified in question #13:

- General/Family Practice
- Internal Medicine-General
- Geriatric Medicine
- Oncology
- Other Internal Medicine Subspecialty
- Emergency Medicine
- Pediatrics-General
- Pediatric Subspecialty
- Surgery-General
- Orthopedics
- Other Surgical Subspecialty
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Occupational Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Multiple Specialties
- Not Able to Classify: _____

D. SATISFACTION WITH PLANS

If you are either going into Patient Care as a Physician Assistant, or considered Patient Care as a Physician Assistant, please complete the following:

23. Did you have difficulty finding a position as a Physician Assistant?

- Yes
- No
- Haven't looked yet (Skip to #27)

If Yes, what would you say was the main reason? (mark only one)

- Overall lack of practice opportunities for Physician Assistants
- Lack of opportunities for PA's with little or no experience
- Lack of practice opportunities for PA's in desired geographic locations
- Lack of opportunities for PA's in desired practice setting (ex. Hospital, HMO, etc.)
- Inadequate salary/compensation offered
- Family/Spouse considerations
- Other (specify): _____

24. Did you have to change your plans because of limited PA job opportunities?

- Yes
- No

25. How many practices/facilities/jobs did you apply to for a Physician Assistant position?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- Over 15

26. How many PA employment offers did you receive?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6-10
- Over 10

27. What is your assessment of practice opportunities for PA's within 50 miles of the location of your PA Program in the following settings?

A. Practice Setting:	Many Jobs	Some Jobs	Few Jobs	Very Few Jobs	No Jobs	Unknown
Physician Offices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospital-Inpatient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospital-Ambulatory/Emergency Room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freestanding Health Center or Clinic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B. Specialty Area:						
Primary Care (IM, Peds, Fam Prac)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-Primary Care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. What is your overall assessment of practice opportunities for PA's nationally?

- Many Jobs
- Some Jobs
- Few Jobs
- Very Few Jobs
- No Jobs
- Unknown

29. Please share any comments or observations on the job market and career opportunities for PA's.



SERIAL #