

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

FACILITATING A PROVIDER PIPELINE
TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

ATSU | Arizona School of
Health Sciences



AT A GLANCE

Community health center (CHC) partners

- 12 CHC partners (as of October 2024)
 - » Three to eight students per CHC
- Capstone project: **Community Health Improvement (CHI)** or **Quality Improvement in Healthcare (QIH)** drives student engagement in the community

Hometown Scholars

- CHC partners identify members of the community to attend physician assistant (PA) school.
- Student returns to endorsing CHC for clinical-year training.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL EDUCATION (RDME)?

Each CHC partner selects an RDME to oversee students' clinical-year experiences, provide guidance, and coordinate logistical support necessary to ensure student success in meeting the requirements of the clinical-year curriculum, including mentoring and support of the student-led master's capstone project.

The RDME is:

- A prescribing clinician (preferably a PA, if available).
- Knowledgeable about organizational operations and personnel.
- Able to develop and maintain relationships in the community to facilitate student experiences (for example, hospital-based Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences or SCPEs).
- Provided administrative support and time necessary to fulfill the duties of the position (average 10 hours weekly of protected time for the RDME and/or the RDME's administrative support staff).

RDME duties

Department faculty and staff to provide mentoring/support for all required activities.

- Participate in student cohort selection via Zoom introductions, Q&A sessions, etc. (January-February).
- Orchestrate an orientation for the PA students to the campus and community (September).
- Oversee and facilitate proctoring of required assessments (written, practical, and verbal).
- Recruit and screen preceptors.
- Create and coordinate each student's SCPE (rotation) schedule for the year (June).
- Ensure student credentialing is completed for hospital rotations in the community.
- Ensure preceptor obligations and deadlines are met, including credential paperwork, preceptor training, response to student check-in, and student performance evaluations.

RURAL AND PRIMARY CARE FOCUSED

ATSU-ASHS' PA program has been awarded three grants from the Health Resources and Services Administration.

- Scholarships for Health Professions Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds
- Primary Care Training and Enhancement (PCTE)
- PCTE Rural Health Training

EXCELLENT DIDACTIC PREPARATION AND CLINICAL SKILLS

14 months of didactic education prior to clinical rotations.

- Systems based
- Social determinants of health
- Communication drills
- Extensive clinical procedural skills education using advanced technologies and simulation