A Collaborative Approach To Increase The Training And Recruitment Of Physician Assistants At Rural And Underserved Sites In Arizona:

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The Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers (AACHC) is Arizona’s Primary Care Association (PCA) since 1985.
AACHC

- Comprises the state’s largest network of Primary Care Providers serving urban, rural, and tribal areas (200+ sites).

- Is committed to working with a variety of partners to expand tools that health centers and organizations serving those in need can utilize to address the needs of their patient populations and improve health outcomes while continuing to demonstrate a cost savings.

- Has strong local, state, regional and federal partners with which it leverages resources to accomplish goals.

- Provides a variety of educational opportunities for members, including peer networking committees which provide a forum for sharing of best practices among member colleagues for optimal healthcare delivery.
Arizona Alliance For Community Health Centers (AACHC)
Workforce Development: Program Collaborations With the Arizona Department of Health Services-Arizona’s Primary Care Office (PCO)
Access to primary care is difficult for many people living in rural and underserved communities in Arizona. Health Centers & Rural Clinics often struggle to find Primary Care Providers to practice at these critical healthcare access sites.
ISSUE: More Patients in the System

Affordable Care Act of 2010 means:

• Millions of new patients will have insurance and therefore, access to care.

• Increased funding for 15,000 new providers at CHC’s Increased funding for PA /Physician training (Title VII)
ISSUE: Impending Physician Shortage

According to the AAMC and other health policy experts:
Shortage of 159,000 physicians by 2025

2014 Match Results for US Medical Graduates:

- 45% Family Medicine filled with US graduates
- >90% Derm, Ortho, ENT, Plastics, Radiation Oncology filled with US graduates
- Only 2% of IM residents going into general internal medicine practice!

Source: American Association of Medical Colleges
ISSUE: ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

• Access to primary care is difficult for many people living in rural America\(^1\)

• Growing number of rural residents who gained health insurance under the ACA will exacerbate the access problem\(^2\)

• Newly acquired ACA-insured population is estimated to increase the use of physicians by 7.9\(^3\)

• Who will provide the additional primary care visits needed?

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1. Donaldson MS, Yordy KD, Lahn KN, Vanselow NA. Primary Care: America's Health in a New Era. Washington (DC) 1996.
ISSUE: ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

PAs and NPs provide substantial portions of primary care visits in both rural and urban settings.

NPs-19%
PAs-7%

Both are well positioned to help alleviate physician shortages, especially in rural areas.

Patient outcomes are similar
Patient satisfaction is high

Rural Health Research Center
Policy Brief #155 March 2016

How Could Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants Be Deployed to Provide Rural Primary Care?
“The PA is a competency-based occupation. Different PAs do different work. It is based on a "negotiated" role between an individual physician and a PA. This makes it unique. It means PAs can do a very wide range of tasks- and can have roles that change and expand significantly over the course of a career.” – Eugene Schneller
Physician Assistants

• Each year more than 6,000 PAs are added to the U.S. health workforce.¹

• The PA workforce is projected to increase by 58% by 2020 ², ³

• By 2025 there are projected to be 125,000 PAs

• Approximately 3200 PAs practicing in Arizona
  • A provider ratio of 29 per 100,000 population

¹ Demand for America’s PAs Surges in New Era of Healthcare AAPA. https://www.aapa.org/twocolumn.aspx?id=3311


Figure 10. Number of active licensed physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and certified nurse midwives in Arizona from 2007-13 and those that were trained in Arizona.  

Source: Page 26
Growth of PA Educational Programs

As of Sept 2017, there are 229 ARC-PA Accredited PA Programs in the U.S. with another 62 projected programs by 2021.
Florida just passed legislation to allow PAs to prescribe controlled substances.
COLLABORATING WITH PA’S: RECRUITMENT, ROLES, & RELATIONSHIPS


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Slides shared by:
Randy D. Danielsen, PhD, PA, DFAAPA
Arizona School of Health Sciences A.T. Still University Mesa, AZ:
Group Table Discussion:
Based on the information we reviewed earlier, Physician Assistants are well positioned to help alleviate physician shortages, especially in rural areas.

How can we work together to:

- **Address any misconceptions or out of date information on the scope of work for Physician Assistants.**
- **Provide any suggestions to help increase the training & recruitment of Physician Assistants at Rural and Underserved Sites in Arizona**
- **Market Rural and Underserved sites in Arizona as an employer of choice for Physician Assistants.**
Group Sharing
Any Questions?
Thank You!

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