



# National Association of Physicians' Assistants

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September <sup>7</sup>~~28~~, 1972

Robert G. Smith, Executive Secretary  
Wyoming State Medical Society  
Post Office Box 1387  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001

Dear Mr Smith : -

We are in possession of a copy of your letter dated August 28th, addressed to Robert B. Weinheimer, a student in the Physician's Assistant training program at the U.S.P.H.S. Hospital, S.I., N.Y. Needless to say we are disturbed with the contents of that letter.

Primarily, Mr Smith, the training program at the Public Health facility was one for which we worked tirelessly since 1962 to initiate, develop and start in operation. Our motivation at that time was to provide competent medical treatment and care to American Flag merchant mariners who had no such medical protections. The concept took hold even more than we originally anticipated, and the training facility opened its doors to PA aspirants who would not choose careers professionally in the merchant marine, but who would seek employment with medical institutions, private and public, with physicians in group and single practice - and in any other sector utilizing the new concept of this important personage. The Health Training Center on Staten Island is one in which we maintain extensive interest, and a close rapport.

NAPA was formed as a direct result of that training program, and indeed - of the total number of graduates produced from the Health Training Center - 140 - all are members of our organization.

There are two large groups in the nation which represent physician's assistants: the American Academy of Physicians Associates - representing the Duke University segment, and our own, primarily representing the U.S.P.H.S. variety. The only difference being the academic requirements at Duke, and our own medical skills training approach to upgrading military service experiences, etc. Our two groups work very closely together, and we do anticipate a merger

efforts in the future.

We are particularly upset in that your organization, as a requirement for state employment, asks for a 'certificate' from the American Association of Physicians Assistants.

We must now ask: Who are the American Association of Physicians Assistants? We have very little knowledge of this group which purposes to represent PA's, and really cannot see the logic in such representation. We are well aware of the numbers of graduate PA's in the nation - the majority - 60% - from our own program and all being members of NAPA. The remaining PA's stem from the Duke program or its subsidiary and/or related training programs, and those graduates are members of the American Academy of Physicians' Associates.

We have never been contacted by the American Association of Physicians Assistants, nor has the American Academy of Physicians' Associates been contacted by them. This is really extraordinary in that we are the two largest organization in the nation representing the PA and involved in the only real training programs to some extent. We do know the American Association of Physicians Assistants DID put out a mimeograph document which tends to encourage that we have given approval to their program, but this is not so. We have never discussed anything with them. The similar situation exists with the American Academy of Physicians' Associates: no contact was ever made. Indeed, to the contrary - requested information was refused the President of the American Academy in his efforts to elicit data on the American Association of Physicians Assistants.

Although we are pleased to learn, even by second-hand nature, that the PA concept is finally taking hold in your state, and under the aegis of the State Medical Society. But our sense of pleasure is somewhat off-set by the stipulation of a 'certificate' requirement. Not just a certification, but from the American Association of Physicians Assistants only. This seems incredible.

NAPA members are in every sense of the word 'qualified' - as are the members of the American Academy of Physicians' Associates. Both are, to be sure, eminently skilled and employable any place in the nation. We might mention that the Duke members are heading up programs of this form of medical training all over the country right now - and are excellent in their field of endeavor.

As far back as April of 1971, when we communicated with various state officials concerning NAPA and the legislation pending regarding physician's assistants, including Wyoming, we know this information was passed down to the State Medical Society from the Board of Medical Examiners. It might be meritorious to say that our files indicate no response from your organization to date.

With the possibility that such literature inadvertently was mislaid, we are enclosing herewith a brochure about our organization, along with our publication that provides even more data.

We would very much like to be in a position to place our graduates in the various states of this United States and this certainly includes Wyoming. All of our members MUST be graduates of the recognized training programs - i.e. the USPHS or DUKE, etc., and all of our members are well-qualified in all respects to perform adequately in the health-care delivery system so short-handed today. We would greatly appreciate your comments and ideas in this regard.

Hoping that we will hear from you, we remain,

Very truly yours,

Burt E. Lanpher,  
Executive Director

WEA  
encl. a.s.  
cc.:

- (1) R. Haberberger,  
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Staten Island, N.Y.
- (2) John Braun, AAPA  
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