

The following are quotations of nurses who work with University trained physician's assistants. The only editorial changes are those that were made to conceal the identity of the respondents. All of the responses that were received are included and are otherwise complete.

These comments were made at the conclusion of a questionnaire that dealt with the interpersonal attitudes and reactions of the RN and PA. The comments were optional. A total of 43 comments were made out of a possible total of 84. The number preceding the comment indicates the grade of the reaction using the following scale:

1. Enthusiastic
2. Supportive
3. Neutral
4. Negative
5. Hostile

RN(MS):

- 2 "I work directly with PA's and have formed an interdisciplinary team relationship with them and have encouraged this with our nursing staff."

RN(BS):

- 1 "I have been working with a P.A. for one year. If he is representative of the entire group, I feel that the P.A. is a great asset to the hospital staff. Not only does the P.A. seem well-trained for the job that he does, but the quality of his work is outstanding. The P.A. is also capable of promoting improvement and continuity in patient care. This is achieved by discussing various patients with the nursing staff and by making suggestions as to the plan of care for these patients."
- 1 "Our P.A. is not only a well trained professional person, he is an exceptionally brilliant well adjusted co-worker - and a friend."
- 1 "[The P.A.] has been very outstanding in the emergency department. We have all enjoyed working with him. His work is outstanding as well as his medical and surgical knowledge."
- 2 "In educating Army medics in the advanced medical specialist course for 2 yrs., I found many young people in this course actually seeking paramedical employment after service. My opinion is that most of the students I taught were more interested in the type of work the P.A. does rather than nursing. I wish that nursing was more attractive to them because of our great labor shortage but I whole heartedly support the P.A. inspirations of young people because the over all need in the health care team is great also and I feel obligated to give support to such workers as the P.A. Thanks."
- 2 "I feel that the physician's assistant in our office is a definite asset. He is able to take over many of the time consuming chores of both the physician and myself - i.e., emergency care for injuries - dressings and treatments that I used to do - screening of patients - doing physical exams (the routine employment type, etc. I feel that our patients get more personal attention since his arrival as our patient load runs 35-65/day.

We have a private practice in this office, including emergency patients that come to the clinic as well as "walk-in" patients. As we have no receptionist his presence leaves me free to take care of the paper work and telephones - a job that used to get slighted. He seems well trained and understands his limitations - he never hesitates to ask when in doubt and works well under the physician's guidance."

- 2 "I am pleased that the P.A. seems to recognize his limitations and does not hesitate to ask for supervision from the physicians when necessary. I think he and I enjoy a relationship where either of us feels free to ask for guidance or information from the other, enjoying a team relationship."

RN(Diploma):

- 1 "The P.A. is a well trained one and I really enjoy working with [him]."
- 1 "As a nurse I feel physician's assistants are very needed people and can see a valuable place in the medical profession for them. They are especially valuable in our out-patient clinic. When there is not always a physician immediately available a physician assistant is very worthwhile to consult with and combine information with it."
- 2 "The ethics of the [P.A.'s] are highly commendable--they are considerate of older nurses,[as reiterated in] their statement 'We can learn much from you'. They have been very well received by patients in the Emergency Room and by the two physicians who employ them."
- 2 "Our P.A. has been an asset to both nurseries--especially assisting new and relief nurses in the I.C.S. with equipment and critically ill infants."
- 2 "This past year having a P.A. has taken a load of work off of the Nurses, especially [in] respirator and monitor care."
- 2 "I feel very fortunate to be associated with our two P.A.'s. They are well educated--apparently trained very well. I, as an RN, would like to learn some of their functions."
- 2 "I think my answers[in the questionnaire] are all indicative of the value I place on our P.A. He does a good job and has shown there is certainly a need for this type of person in Industrial Medicine."
- 2 "I have found that the P.A.'s working in our E.R. have proven themselves beneficial to our work plan. Of course, I have been fortunate enough to have had the best P.A.'s with whom to work. I believe they add to the organization of the E.R. because of the great number of patients we see. They can care for a great number of patients relieving the physician to carry out his work."
- 2 "I feel it is unfortunate that our present P.A. is not allowed to function up to capacity.
It seems a waste of good, needed talent."
- 2 "He acts like an efficient go between with his supervising M.D., He is much more available [than the physician and] is a helpful co-worker."

- 2 "I feel there is a definite need for P.A.'s. As far as ability is concerned, I think this is based on the individual. As with any other personnel groups, some are more interested than others. They should be judged as individuals - not as a group. I do feel that personnel should work with them, with no hostility, for the benefit of the patients. I feel that most individuals have been cooperative with them, and that they have been cooperative in return."
- 2 "I feel that some of these questions were not clearly worded. I have generally been impressed with the P.A. program; including their training and range of experience. I feel there is a strong need for this program in very many areas of the community. I have not felt threatened by any of the P.A.'s I've worked with, as I think, there is a definite difference between a nurse's position and that of a P.A. I have always welcomed any assistance with patient care and all of the P.A.'s have been exceptionally eager to help. I feel I have learned a great deal from our conversations about particular cases."
- 2 "I feel there is a very definite need and place for the well trained and prepared P.A. in the field of ministering to the ill population of the world. I would hope to see more and better schools developed for the training of the more qualified persons applying for the positions that will be coming available in the future. Schools should aim at selecting persons with ample or better basic education to enter the field of study. With more qualified graduates available, we should hope to see a better quality medical care available to more of the population than is possible at present with our increasing shortage of physicians. I believe the P.A. should always work with medical guidance in all areas of his training, and that schools should be set up for advanced training in special fields of study."
- 2 "The P.A. has been readily accepted by the Nursing Service but not by the local M.D.'s which has been unfortunate in our location. We feel ours has done extremely well."
- 3 "The P.A. is strictly under the supervision of an M.D. The orders written by a P.A. on the doctor's order sheet are always read and countersigned by an M.D. I do not feel any of the questions in number 39 are applicable." (Question #39 asks the nurse to choose a category that describes her relationship with the P.A. - subordinate, supervisor, peer or a combination).
- 3 "I don't prefer it [that nurses be trained to perform the tasks that are being performed by the P.A.] but I do feel that they too should have this type of training available if they desire it."
- 3 "The relationship of PA and RN varies depending on the situation, type duties of both individuals, the education and experience and personality of those involved in a given position.
The emotionally secure, adequately trained PA will mold into a difficult new position more readily as he accepts the fact that other persons in the setup are knowledgeable also.
In this situation, our relationship has improved as the PA settled into the acceptance of his duties and has worked more cooperatively during the last 6 months with few emotional upsets among his coworkers.
The P.A. program is a valuable part of the future medical fields and a more intensive program is urged for applicants with better educational backgrounds."

- 4 "I have worked with P.A.'s in the . . . Hospital Operating Room. I think that overall they are very much needed. I also think most of them I have worked with try to play the doctor role and feel superior to the rest of the nursing staff."
- 4 "It is my opinion that this P.A. was in a position that he should not have been. He was taking the place of an M.D. in his absence on many occasions. This put him and all working with him in a very awkward position. Therefore, most of my answers are negative. I am sure that under the proper working conditions that they would have been more positive. I am certain this P.A. was well trained and would do well in a proper position, but not a substitute M.D. role."
- 4 "I feel we have a need for the P.A. in the community but I do think they should be limited."
- 5 "1. There should be some positive way that patients and relatives can differentiate between a physician and his assistant, such as colored coat.
2. Many procedures performed by P.A.'s, I personally would only allow a physician to perform for me. Some procedures performed by P.A.'s seem to be done for practice and experience, such as spinal punctures on all C.V.A. cases.
3. I believe an assistant should follow the physicians plan of treatment and not the physician follow the P.A.'s plan.
4. P.A.'s need to know the working schedule of other hospital departments. Ordering procedures at random, all hours of the day and night (most appearing non-emergent) is disrupting any attempt of following a system or working schedule. (I believe this is necessitating the hiring of more personnel.)
5. Patients "length of stay" in hospital is no indication of success or failure of the P.A. system. The rapidity and frequency of patients return for treatment, must be considered."

LPN:

- 1 "The P.A. is without a doubt a great asset to our medical group. I feel very privileged to work with and for him. He performs his duties to the fullest extent. He is very capable and knowledgeable in all areas. All I can say is I would trust him with my own life as well as that of my family's."
- 1 "This P.A. seems very well trained, and dedicated to his work. Thorough in his investigation into the cause and treatment of illnesses. He is very interested in his work."
- 1 "I feel that the P.A. program is very much needed. I feel the P.A. is very superior in all functions. He is given as much respect as we would give any physician. The patients all trust him completely. We are extremely fortunate to have this P.A. in our office."

1 "My experience with working with a P.A. has been most enjoyable and has proven profitable to myself and our Physician in helping the office function at a higher quality, providing more services to our patients and relieving our Physician of skill and giving him more free time to himself.

Our P.A. has proven himself most capable of handling any situation in the medical field and we only wish there were more like him."

2 "I believe they have earned their place and do a fine job."

2 "Very helpful"

2 "I think that our P.A. has been a great help to us, physicians and nurses alike and I hope they have more like him soon."

2 "Since the P.A. has been in the practice the doctor has been able to see a greater number of patients and spend more time with the seriously ill patients. I feel that a well trained P.A. can help ease the doctor shortage and be very beneficial in hospitals and general practices. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with our P.A."

2 "I feel the P.A., when well trained and prepared, can be of great service to the medical field and of much help to the physician. I have enjoyed working with a P.A. in the office, and I feel that a P.A. does lighten the heavy load of the physician."

2 "This P.A. seems genuinely concerned and dedicated to the patients and his work. He seems very thorough in his examinations and always consults with Physician on call as to the diagnosis and medications."

2 "As an LPN who works with a P.A. each day, I have learned a lot with his assistance.

I have also observed that P.A.'s are very helpful in assisting doctors."

Other type of nursing personnel:

2 "I enjoy working with our P.A. He [gives] me answers and shows me things that are of help to me."

2 "I feel that every hospital and doctor's office should be on the program of having a P.A. Not only does the medical staff benefit, but the patients can be given the attention they need more quickly and they can have the assurance that medical help is available at all times, especially in the absence of the doctor."

2 "Professionally the P.A. is well accepted by the medical staff and patients both. I find him well trained and confident in his work."

2 "I feel that the P.A. I work for is really good and gives me, his nurse, a lot of help and support. I feel he is adequately qualified to be a P.A., and is working out real well with anyone he comes in contact with. As far as I know, he is being accepted by most all the people he sees and is associated with. Thank you."

- 3 "It is felt that the Physician's Associate Program is a boon to medicine. The duties that can and are assumed and delegated to the Physician's Associate take the routine, time-consuming, but necessary preliminary chores away from the physician. This leaves diagnosis and treatment the responsibility of the physician, thereby saving valuable man-hours of the doctor's time and often speeding up care and treatment. The program should be expanded."
- 4 "The P.A.'s are giving the doctors a helping hand, but some seem to overstep their bounds in what they are trained to do."

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