

Title: Employer Demand for Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners to care for Older People and People with Disabilities

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Issue: This study is intended to inform educators, employers, and policymakers about employee demands for PAs and NPs in the care of older persons and people with disabilities and to guide federal investments in workforce development and planning for these high-growth populations.

Methods: In this descriptive, cross-sectional study, we analyzed job posting data for 2014 from a leading labor analytics firm and compared job postings in long-term care and care for elders and those with disabilities with occupied positions and with the overall job market for NPs and PAs.

Findings: While job opportunities abound for NPs to care for geriatric populations and those with disabilities, we have identified the lack of job availability for PAs as a potential barrier to entry. Employer demand for both NPs and PAs in specialty care is considerably higher than for primary care, and market forces alone are not likely to reverse this trend.

Discussion: Given the high employer demand for NPs and PAs in LTC in 2014, educators should develop curricula that prepare NPs and PAs for careers in care of elders and people with disabilities. Given that NPs comprise a larger percentage of the home health and nursing and residential care facility clinician workforce than physicians, policymakers should consider the impact of restrictive scope of practice legislation on access to care for aging and chronically disabled constituents.

Key Words: Physician assistants, nurse practitioners, chronically disabled care, geriatric care.

HWRC Website Link:

https://healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/sites/healthworkforce.ucsf.edu/files/REPORT_2017_PA_NP_Demand_in_LTC_Report_FINAL.pdf