

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT



WHAT THEY DO

Physician assistants (also called PAs) practice under the supervision of a physician as part of a patient-centred health care team. PAs work to improve the efficiency, capability, and productivity of physician services. Their scope of practice varies and is determined on an individual basis. PA activities may include conducting patient interviews, histories, and examinations; ordering and interpreting tests; performing selected diagnostic and therapeutic interventions; and, assisting in surgery and doing pre-operation and post-operation care.

HOW THEY WORK

PAs predominantly work in primary health care and emergency medicine but can be found in more than thirty specialties. Their scope of practice is formally outlined in a practice contract or agreement between the supervising physician, the PA, and the facility where the PA will work.

TRAINING

To become a PA, you must complete a bachelor's degree. Currently, there are no accredited PA programs offered in Alberta. Physician Assistants can train at one of four post-secondary schools that offer accredited PA programs: The Canadian Forces Health Services Training Centre in Ontario; McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario; the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine; and the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine. Physician Assistants are not currently regulated in Alberta, but work is underway to do this.

Physician Assistants in Alberta 2019 (CIHI 2019 data)	
SUPPLY	45
% CHANGE SINCE 2018	+12.5%
RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION	1.0

VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hclxKh1f3c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDrmBSpWrsk>

RESOURCES

ALBERTA ALIS PROFILE:

<https://alis.alberta.ca/occinfo/occupations-in-alberta/occupation-profiles/physician-assistant/>

AHS CAREER PROFILE:

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/Page8754.aspx>