

# Interprofessional Learning and Collaboration: Impact of Physician Assistants in Conducting Clinical and Translational Research

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Physician Assistants (PA) form an integral part of our healthcare system. In addition to caring for and prescribing directed medications to patients, PAs can participate and practice in all areas of medical care, including in the clinical and translational research space. Despite this fact, only about 1 in 4 PAs are involved in clinical research. A student-wide survey of Rutgers School of Health Professions (R-SHP) PA program students was conducted to gauge the level of interest and potential engagement in clinical translational research activities.

A total of 32 students in years 1-3 of the R-SHP PA program responded to the survey. Students collectively were concerned (95%) and felt that learning about treatment, managing adverse events, safety, and regulatory information on drugs or biologics were key components to their education. 83% of students also felt that there is value in conducting, managing, and enrolling their patients

in clinical trials. All the students that have had previous experience involved in clinical trials favored the joint degree program. These results indicated that there was much interest in involving R-SHP PA students in clinical research and education. It also supports the potential of initially identifying courses in the current MS PA program curriculum as well as the MS Clinical Research Management program curriculum wherein learning outcomes overlap, which can then provide the basis for further investigation into the future creation of a joint degree program or badging credentialing in clinical research as part of the R-SHP PA program.

