



2020

INDIANA PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WORKFORCE BRIEF

Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy // January 2022



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
BOWEN CENTER FOR HEALTH
WORKFORCE RESEARCH & POLICY

2020

INDIANA PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WORKFORCE

Fact Sheet

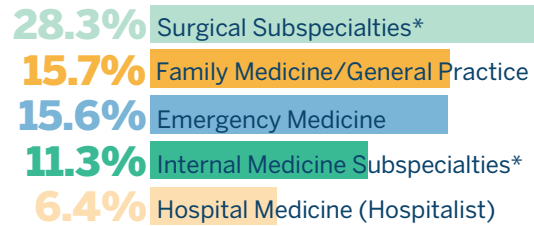


this report is based on the

1,182
Physician Assistants

in 2020 who hold an active license and have either a practice address in Indiana or provide telehealth services to Indiana residents

Top five supervising physician specialties reported by PAs



*Surgical specialties include: General, Cardiothoracic, Colon & Rectal, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Neurologic, Ophthalmic, Oral & Maxillofacial, Orthopedic, Otorhinolaryngology, Pediatric, Plastic & Maxillofacial, Urology, Vascular
*Internal Medicine specialties include: General Practice, Allergy & Immunology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Geriatrics, Hematology, Infectious Disease, Nephrology, Oncology, Pulmonology, Rheumatology, Sports Medicine

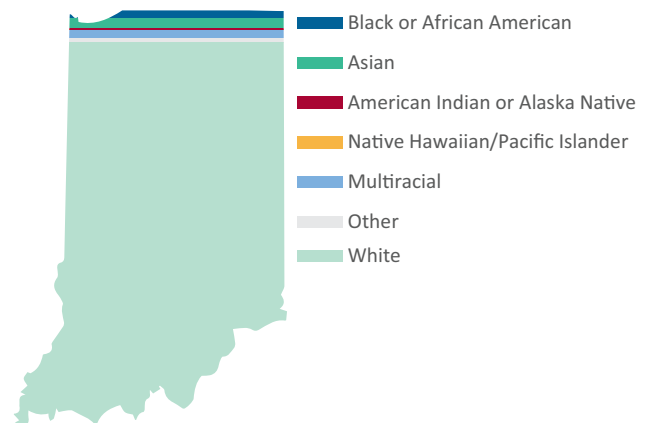
Physician Assistants by Gender



Employment Characteristics



Demographics of Indiana Physicians



53.0%
of Indiana PAs reported engaging in the delivery of telemedicine services



95.9%
Almost all of Indiana PAs reported their primary field is in patient care/documentation



54.3%

Indiana



22.3%

Indiana's Contiguous States



23.4%

Other States



0.0%

Another Country

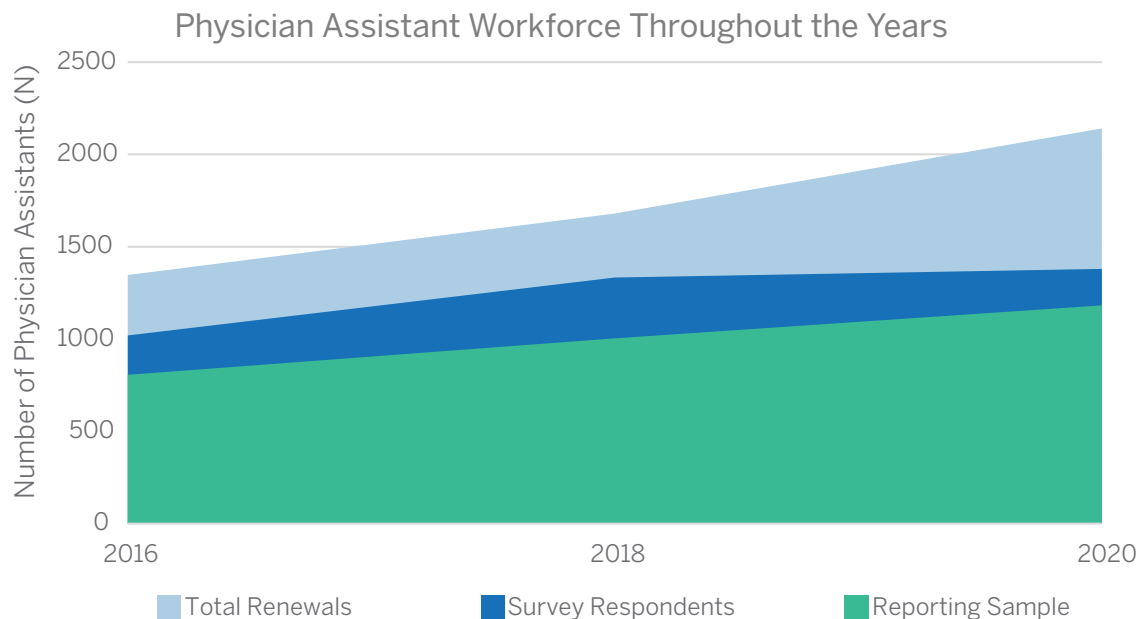


SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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INDIANA PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WORKFORCE 2020

Indiana is fortunate to have a robust mechanism to identify, quantify, and describe the physician assistant workforce throughout the state. In Indiana, physician assistants are licensed and regulated by the Indiana Physician Assistant Committee, which resides under the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency (PLA). The PLA is responsible for administering numerous health professions licenses, including physician assistant licenses. For the past few decades, Indiana physician assistants have provided information on their demographic, education, and practice characteristics through a series of supplemental questions embedded within the license renewal process. In 2018, a law was enacted that requires all physician assistant licensees (and other selected health professions) who were completing license renewal online to provide key information in order to inform State policy and planning (Senate Enrolled Act/SEA 223-2018¹). This law went into effect for physician assistants for their 2020 license renewals making this the first brief containing information on all physician assistants who renewed their license online.²



WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE REPORTING SAMPLE?

- Active physician assistants who renewed their license online
- Actively practicing in their field
- Practice located in Indiana or provide services to Hoosiers through telemedicine

WHO IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE REPORTING SAMPLE?

- Physician assistants who renewed offline (paper renewals)
- Those with inactive licenses
- Not actively practicing
- Located out-of-state and not providing services to Hoosiers

Interestingly, PAs have higher rates of offline renewals (34.0%) compared to many other professions (physicians: 3.3%, nurses: 2.6%, dentists: 3.6%), which may be attributable in part to variations in data export. This results in missing workforce data for PAs that renewed offline.

Additionally, Indiana PAs renewed their license in April – June 2020. At that time, there were a number of pandemic-related flexibilities offered to ensure public welfare, including regulatory flexibilities that may include extension of renewal.³ These pandemic-related policies likely have some impact on the information available on the PA workforce.

1. Indiana Senate Enrolled Act 223-2018. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2018/bills/senate/223#document-b0603ddf>

2. Questions administered to physician assistants can be found at: <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/22414/2020%20Physician%20Assistant%20Survey%20Instrument.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

3. Indiana Executive Order 20-05. Available at: https://www.in.gov/gov/files/EO_20-05.pdf

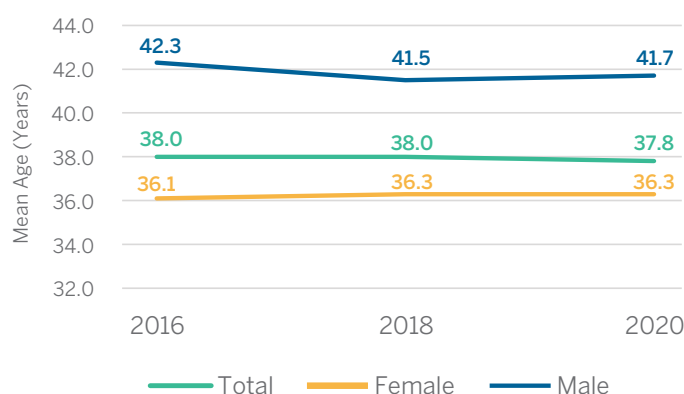
EMPLOYMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of Indiana PAs have no planned changes in their employment (90.5%; up from 88.4% in 2018), but 6.9% hope to increase their hours in the physician assistant field.

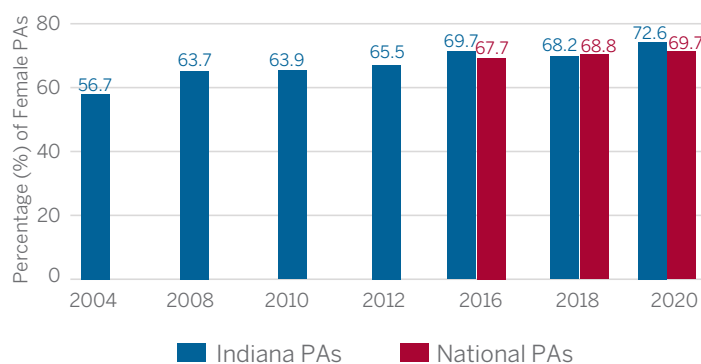


What is the mean age for all PAs, male PAs, and female PAs over time?



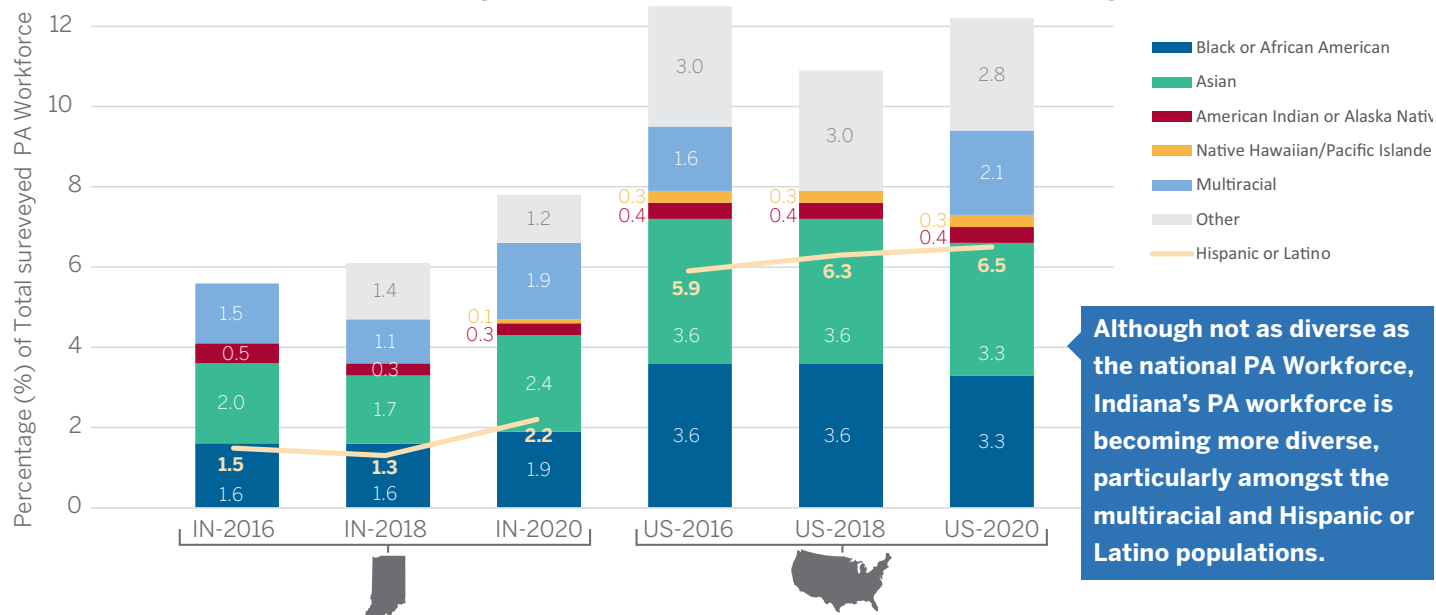
Trends in PA age have been relatively stable. Female PAs are consistently younger than male PAs.

What are trends in sex demographics for Indiana PAs over time, and how does that compare to national averages^{1,2}?



Indiana's percentage of female PAs is slightly higher than the national average.¹

Trends in Physician Assistant Racial and Ethnic Diversity



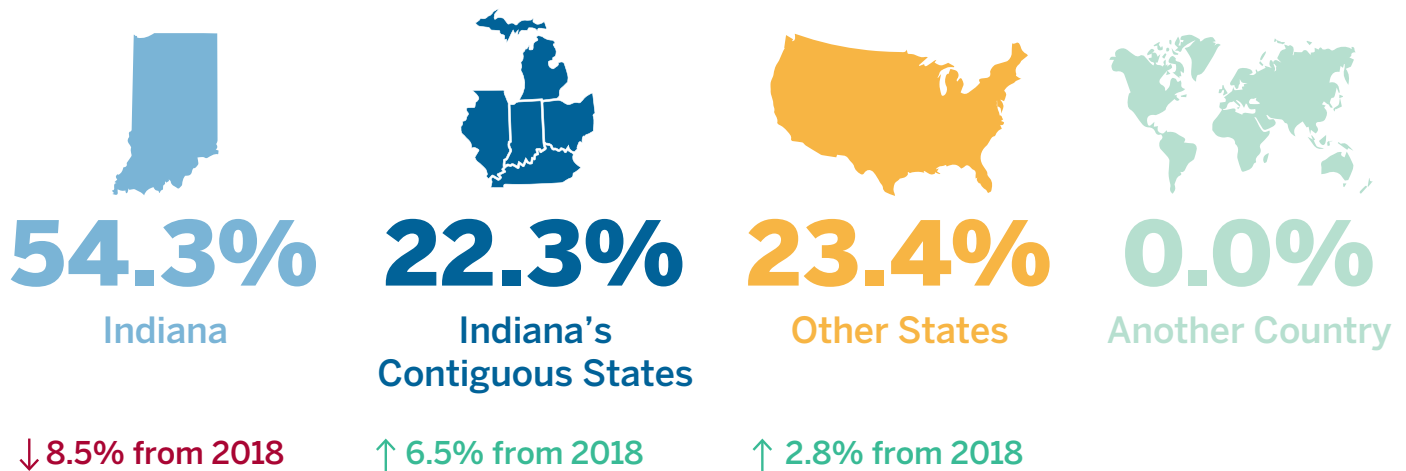
Although not as diverse as the national PA Workforce, Indiana's PA workforce is becoming more diverse, particularly amongst the multiracial and Hispanic or Latino populations.

1. Indiana PA demographics sourced from historical PA data reports, available on the Bowen Portal at <https://bowenportal.org/index.php/resources/>.

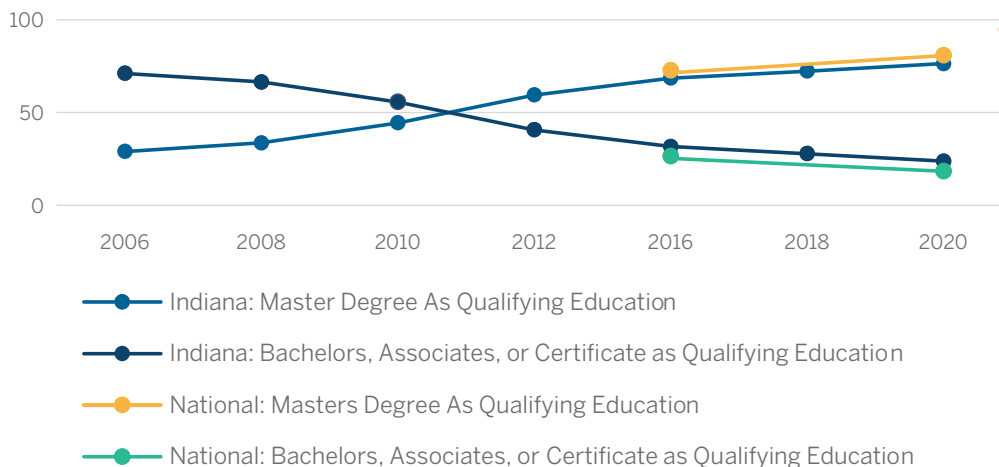
2. Source for national PA sex data: Statistical Profile of Certified PAs. 2020. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statistical-Profile-of-Certified-PAs-2020.pdf>

EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Where did Indiana PAs complete their qualifying education?



How have Indiana PAs qualifying education changed over time?



The number of Indiana PAs who entered the workforce with less than a Master's Degree has been steadily declining, likely attributable to the change in educational entry requirements for PAs and retirements from those PAs with less than a Master's Degree.

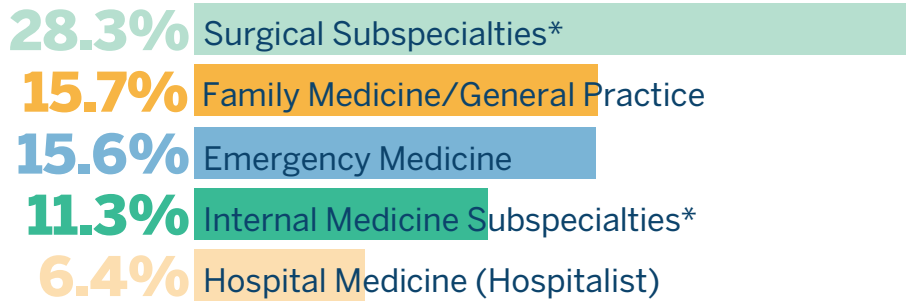
Qualifying education for Indiana PAs is similar to national data for highest education in recent years (national data was not able to be identified prior to 2013).

Of note, more educational data will be available for the Indiana PA workforce in future years. The 2022 [Indiana Physician Assistant Workforce survey](#) was recently approved by the [Governor's Health Workforce Council](#) and includes a question on not just qualifying education, but PAs will also be asked about their highest level of education. This will allow a more accurate picture of the current education and training of Indiana's PA workforce and will produce a more comparable figure to national statistics on the PA workforce.

1. Historical data on Indiana's Physician Assistants Workforce is available within the Scholarworks Repository at <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/6008>. Note: Indiana data is only available every two years in conjunction with PA license renewal. Data are unavailable in Indiana for the 2014 renewal period.
2. 2013 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2013StatisticalProfileofCertifiedPhysicianAssistants-AnAnnualReportoftheNCCPA.pdf>
3. 2014 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2014_Stat_Profile.pdf
4. 2015 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2015StatisticalProfileofCertifiedPhysicianAssistants.pdf>
5. 2016 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2016StatisticalProfileofCertifiedPhysicianAssistants.pdf>
6. 2018 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2018StatisticalProfileofCertifiedPhysicianAssistants.pdf>
7. 2020 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.nccpa.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statistical-Profile-of-Certified-PAs-2020.pdf>

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Top five supervising physician specialties reported by PAs

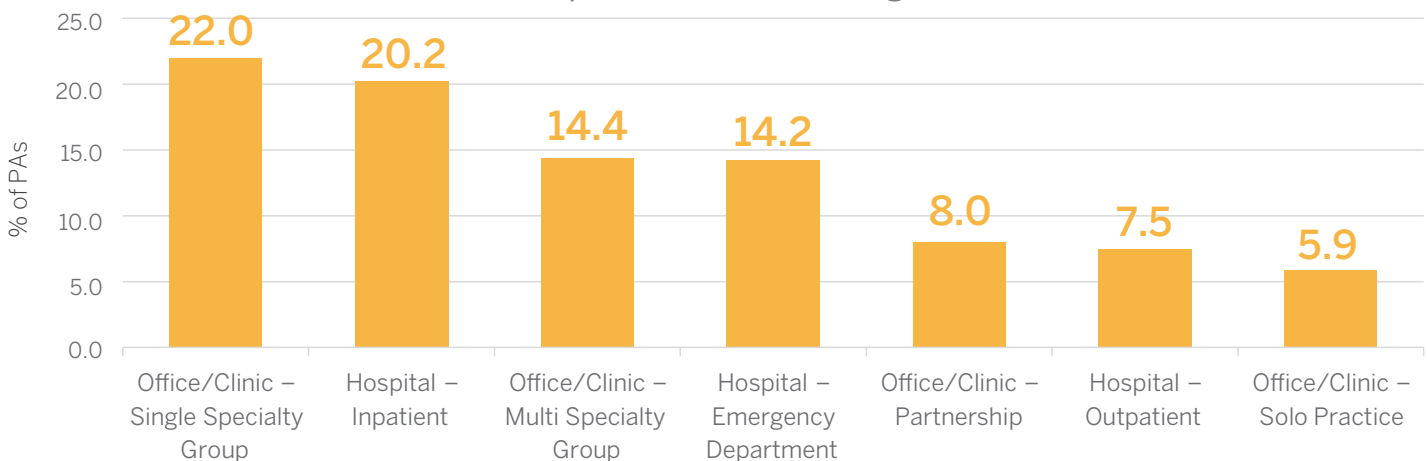


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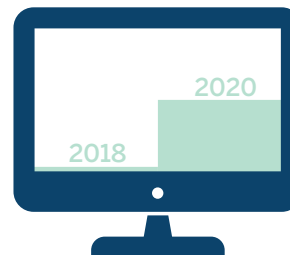
Top 7 PA Practice Settings



INDIANA PAS AND TELEMEDICINE

The 2018 Physician Assistant Workforce Data Report shows only 3.8% of PAs reported providing telemedicine in 2018 and it's up to 53.0% of PAs in 2020...

What happened?!



53.0%
of Indiana PAs reported engaging in the delivery of telemedicine service
Of those, the majority (591, 94.4%) are PAs with a practice address in Indiana.

Great question. Although this may seem like a big jump in PAs that started using telemedicine, it also highlights the importance of data management and reporting protocols. In 2018, only those PAs with a practice address in Indiana were included in data reporting. This strategy excluded any out-of-state PA that uses telemedicine to provide services to Hoosiers from data reporting. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that state borders are only arbitrary boundaries when it comes to the delivery of health care services, especially through the use of telehealth. In 2020 reporting, any PA that provided care to Indiana patients was included in reporting, including those providers with license or practice addresses in other states.

Although it is likely that the increase in telemedicine reporting is related to data management protocols, the COVID-19 pandemic is also a likely contributor. In a February 2020 survey to certified PAs nationally, the American Association of Physician Assistants, found that before COVID-19 only approximately 10% of PAs utilized telemedicine. A follow-up survey from June 2020 (amidst the COVID-19 pandemic), found that the number of PAs that reported using telemedicine nearly tripled at 63.8%.¹

1. Source: PA Use of Telemedicine in June 2020. American Association of Physician Assistants. Available at: <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/June-2020-Telemedicine-DataBrief-Rev.pdf>

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WORKFORCE CAPACITY



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Indiana Physician Assistants (PA)

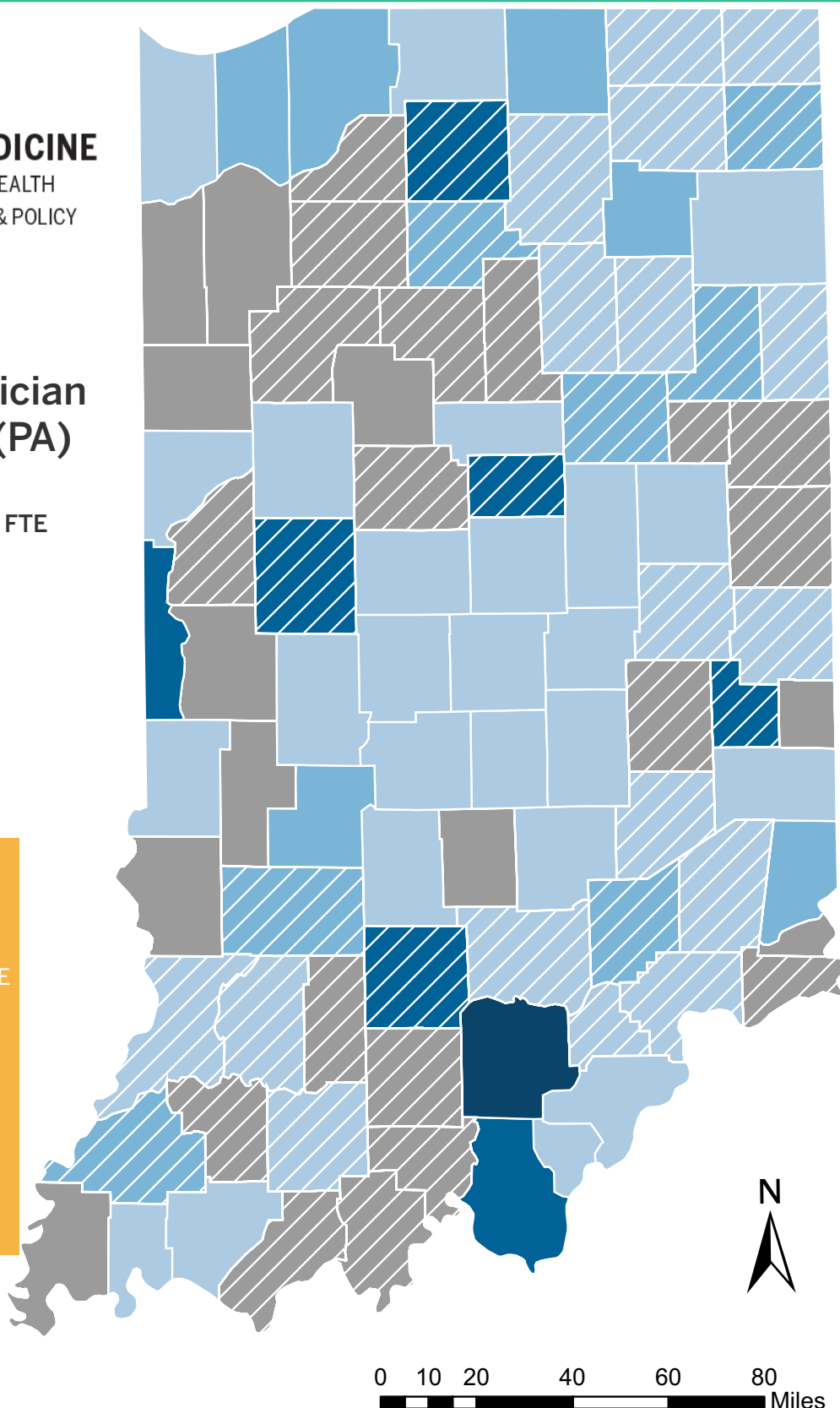
Population per One PA FTE

- ≤19,218
- 19,218 - 40,699
- 40,699 - 115,510
- 115,510 - 280,360
- No Reported FTE
- / / Rural County



Urban counties were found to have nearly eight times more physician assistant FTE than rural counties (655.4 total FTE in urban counties vs. 84 total FTE in rural counties).

As a result, rural counties were generally found to have higher (worse) population-to-provider ratios when compared to urban counties.



Source: Indiana Physician Assistant License and Supplemental Survey Data, 2020. US Department of Agriculture, Rural-Urban Continuum codes, 2019.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

HEA 1248

2019

PHARMACISTS; PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS¹

AUTHOR: REP. DAVISSON

This bill changed terminology from “supervising” physician to “collaborating” physician. It also modified pharmacology training requirements to align with accredited PA education programs where the PA received pharmacology training. This bill also removed and/or modified certain requirements around PA prescribing, including those that impacted new PAs in the first year of practice.

HEA 1392

2020

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND NURSES ²

AUTHOR: REP. BEN SMALTZ

This bill allowed PAs or nurse practitioners to certify cause of death.

SEA 3

2021

TELEHEALTH MATTERS³

AUTHORS: SEN. CHARBONNEAU, DORiot, CRIDER

This bill updated the state definition from telemedicine to telehealth. The definition of “telehealth” was updated to refer to a “specific method of delivery of services, including medical exams and consultations and behavioral health evaluations and treatment, including those for substance abuse, using technology allowed under IC 25-1-9.5-6 to allow a provider to render an examination or other service to a patient at a distant location.” PAs continued to be named as practitioners who can provide telehealth services.

SB 366

2021

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS⁴

AUTHORS: SEN. LEISING, BECKER, ROGERS

This bill would have eliminated certain requirements outlined within collaborative agreements between a collaborating physician and PA, including 1) all tasks delegated to the PA and 2) specific prescribing protocols. This bill would have eliminated requirements for delegated authority in certain instances. This bill passed the Senate chamber and was referred to the House where it never received a committee hearing.

HB 1346*

2022

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS⁵

AUTHORS: REP. VERMILLION

This bill would amend the collaborative practice between physicians and PAs.

*This brief was published during the 2022 legislative session when the final status of the bill was unknown.

House Enrolled Act 1248-2019. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2019/bills/house/1248#digest-heading>

House Enrolled Act 1392-2020. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2020/bills/house/1392>

Senate Enrolled Act 3-2021. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2021/bills/senate/3>

Senate Bill 366-2021. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2021/bills/senate/366#document-5f19049f>

House Bill 1346-2021. Available at: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2022/bills/house/1346#document-16888615>

QUESTIONS?

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