

**Emergency Medicine Postgraduate Education
for Physician Assistants Statement
March 23, 2020**

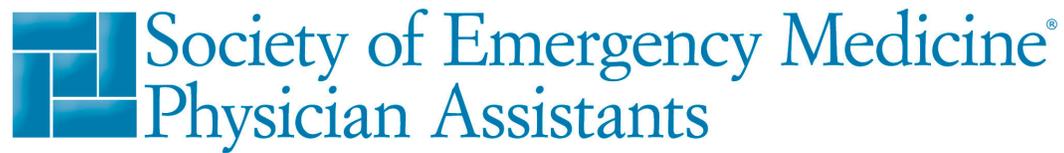
As the national organization representing emergency medicine physician assistants (PAs), who practice in academic and community emergency departments across the country, the Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants (SEMPA) fully supports postgraduate education programs for PAs. These programs, commonly referred to as residencies or fellowships, provide extensive clinical and didactic education to PAs new to emergency medicine. SEMPA recognizes that completion of a postgraduate education program is not necessary but one pathway towards the practice of emergency medicine for PAs.

Postgraduate education programs for PAs in emergency medicine are not a new option; the first program was initiated in 1979 at the University of Southern California/Los Angeles County Medical Center. The number of postgraduate emergency medicine PA programs has since grown, in response to the recognized benefits of their training structure, to include approximately 50 programs spread across 20 states.

Based on institutional preference, SEMPA feels that the term residency or fellowship is appropriate to describe PA postgraduate medical education. Residency or fellowship is also used to describe postgraduate education for other professions such as dentistry, podiatry, pharmacy and others. SEMPA does believe that programs and their participants be clearly identified as a "PA residency", "PA fellowship", "PA resident" or "PA fellow".

Many EMPA postgraduate education programs are affiliated with emergency medicine physician residencies at academic emergency departments and are initiated by their physician leadership. These programs have been successfully integrated while maintaining the structure of the physician residency and without interfering with the educational opportunities for emergency medicine residents or medical students. If an emergency department does not have the volume or resources to support additional learners, there should be careful consideration to the practicality of establishing a PA postgraduate education program. PA postgraduate education programs introduced at academic emergency departments should be introduced with input from faculty and physician residents. Further, compensation for PA trainees is separate and does not come from funding allocated for physician resident funding.

SEMPA believes that physician and PA emergency medicine educational programs can co-exist with careful planning to avoid conflicts and to the benefit of both professions. Physician residents will have the opportunity to learn and work alongside PAs. This may better prepare them for working with and supervising PAs after residency. PA trainees will have the opportunity to learn emergency medicine while reinforcing the physician-PA team concept. In this model, both parties may be better prepared for team-based practice after the completion of their training.



These PA postgraduate education programs are not a substitute for residency trained physicians. PAs do not aspire to replace emergency physicians, but rather to augment the practice of providing accessible, safe, high-quality emergency care to our patients, alongside our physician colleagues. SEMPA desires collaborative efforts within the emergency department and between our stakeholder organizations, where the contributions of all members are respected and valued.