



*Accreditation Review Commission on Education
for the Physician Assistant, Inc.*

ARC-PA New Site Visitor Workshop

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) is seeking applications from individuals interested in volunteering their time as ARC-PA site visitors.

Accreditation is a voluntary, non-governmental process of self-study and external review intended to evaluate, enhance, and publicly recognize quality in institutions and in programs of higher education. The ARC-PA is the recognized accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public and PA profession by defining the *Standards* for PA education and evaluating PA educational programs to ensure their compliance with those *Standards*.

The ARC-PA is composed of representatives from five national physician organizations, the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). As part of the PA program accreditation process, 1-2 day site visits are conducted periodically to new and accredited PA programs. The number of visits varies by year, averaging 35-45.

The site visit is an essential and unique step in the accreditation process--site visitors serve a critical role in providing information to the ARC-PA about a PA Program's demonstrated compliance with the *Standards*. Site visitors act as the "eyes and ears" of the Commission. It is through the written report of the site visitors that it is possible to verify, validate and clarify self-study information and to receive a perspective about the program operation that can only be obtained through direct observation.

Site visitors are selected from a pool of PA and physician educators, clinically practicing PAs, and others involved in PA education. They are appointed for an initial 3-year term and are asked to participate in 1-3 visits per year.

Site visitors receive no compensation for their services. Travel and other direct costs associated with the site visits are reimbursed by the ARC-PA.

Prior to participating in the site visit process, prospective site visitors must first apply to the ARC-PA and be selected from the pool of applicants. Those selected will be invited to attend a site visitor workshop. Site visitor workshops are typically held in conjunction with an annual or semiannual Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) meeting. These intensive one-day workshops provide the potential visitors information about the site visit process. Site visitors who continue to serve as visitors after their initial 3-year term must agree to participate in additional brief site visitor training sessions every 3 years.

The next new site visitor workshop will be held in conjunction with the fall 2006 PAEA meeting in Quebec City, Canada. Current plans are to begin the workshop on the evening of Sunday October, 29th after the PAEA schedule of activities and to complete it by 1 pm on Monday October 30th.

Who may Apply?

- PAs holding current NCCPA certification
- PA program educators (Full time, adjunct or clinical faculty associated with an accredited PA program), with a minimum of 5 years experience as a PA program educator
- Physician employers of PAs.
- Preceptors associated with PA programs, with a minimum of 5 years association with a program
- Other individuals knowledgeable about PA education

Note: Physician assistants applying must hold current NCCPA certification. Physicians applying must hold current licensure as an allopathic or osteopathic physician and must be certified by an ABMS- or AOA-approved specialty board.

Expectations of Site Visitors

- Site visitors must possess superior written, verbal, and interpersonal abilities.
- Site visitors must commit to 1-3 visits per calendar year.
- Site visitors must agree to participate in ARC-PA sponsored site visitor training.
- Site visitors must agree to abide by ARC-PA conflict of interest guidelines. Thus, they shall not participate in consultative activities related to PA accreditation for any program subject to ARC-PA accreditation, even if not for personal gain. Such activities shall not be conducted while serving as a site visitor or for 1 year thereafter.

How to Apply

Interested individuals should submit to the ARC-PA a current curriculum vitae/resume accompanied by a letter of interest detailing why the applicant believes he or she should be considered as a site visitor. This letter should address the applicant's involvement with the PA profession and PA education, and should demonstrate a clear understanding of the responsibility involved in the site visitor role. Submissions should be sent electronically to the email address below:

sitevisitor@arc-pa.org

The deadline for receipt of applications from those interested in participating in the next workshop in Canada is **Friday July 14, 2006**. The ARC-PA will notify applicants of the status of their application in mid September. A modest honorarium to assist in defraying hotel costs for the one night stay will be provided to those invited to attend the site visitor workshop.