



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

CLINICAL POSTGRADUATE PA PROGRAM ACCREDITATION Site Visit Schedule (3.18.10)

An evaluation team can conduct a thorough and accurate assessment of the clinical postgraduate PA educational program in one full day. Site visits should provide the site visit team member(s) information on the program, and should provide the team the opportunity to meet and discuss the program with its administration, faculty, staff, instructors, preceptors, and PA residents.

The primary responsibility of the site visit team is to verify, validate, and clarify, if necessary, the information supplied by the program in its application materials. The purpose of the site visit is to assess the program's demonstrated compliance with the *Standards*.

While the actual schedule may vary from the model below, the types of activities listed here should be included. The visitors need to have an opportunity to discuss the program with its faculty, preceptors, current PA residents, graduates of the program, employers of program graduates.

The Program Director is asked to consult with the site visit team chair before final scheduling occurs. This is best handled when the team chair has a copy of the proposed schedule in hand.

VISIT DAY: (The schedule may begin as early as 7:00 a.m., if necessary).

15-30 minutes **Meeting with Program Director and Medical Director**

Purpose: To review the schedule for the first day, as planned by the program and make desired adjustments when feasible and not excessively disruptive. To allow the evaluator to state briefly the function of the evaluation visit, the ARC-PA, the type of accreditation status available to the program, and what that status represents.

30 to

45 minutes **Meeting with Key Senior Institutional Officials** (such as President, Dean, whomever the Institution wishes to represent the sponsoring institution etc)

Purpose: To discuss issues of institutional support for the program.

60-90 minutes **Review Of Documents, Files, and Records Maintained by the Program On the PA Residents And The Curriculum** (this may be divided into two smaller blocks of time, such as 60 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes later in the day and should be discussed with the site visit team chair.)

Purpose: To assess the adequacy of syllabi, exams, PA resident manuals, PA resident files, policies and other documentation requested in the application that must be available for visitors on site.

1.5-2 hours **Review Of Program Goals, Objectives, Curriculum**

Visitor meets with the Program Director, Medical Director, and key faculty for the program.

Purpose: The responsibility for the format of session rests with the site visitors. This session provides the visitors an opportunity to review thoroughly, discuss, and if necessary, clarify the program's application and supporting materials with the program officials in order to obtain a more complete understanding of the program. The program officials should be prepared to answer clarifying questions which may include reviewing program goals, philosophies, course objectives, operational procedures, PA resident selection criteria, PA resident evaluation protocols, preceptor selection criteria, processes for monitoring preceptors' performance, etc. Additional supporting documentation maybe required to be reviewed or provided as a result of this session.

45 minutes to

1-1/4 hour **Luncheon Meeting**

Purpose: This time may be used in any one of several ways, including interviews with principal faculty members other than program staff, graduates of the program, employers, members of a program advisory committee, or any combination of these individuals. The site visit team may also prefer to have a private lunch. The site visit team chair, in concert with the program director, will determine who to meet, how many individuals to meet, and in the case of PA residents the process of PA resident selection. Meetings may occur:

1. With principal faculty members, for the purpose of assessing how they determine what they teach; their instructional methods; the frequency and means they use to assess and report to PA residents on their individual progress, and related information.
2. With graduates, to provide the site visitors with an opportunity to assess the graduates' satisfaction with their education and their profession. Examples include the degree to which the program prepared them to assume the functions they perform on the job, their impressions of patient acceptance of them.
3. With employers, to obtain information about graduates' performance in working relationships. Employing physicians should be able to report

on the degree to which the graduates have affected their practice, the graduates' acceptability to patients and other health workers with whom the PA come in contact, and the confidence the physician has in the PA.

4. With members of an advisory committee, if one exists, for the purpose of determining their understanding of their advisory function; how often the committee meets; what types of matters are considered; and the difference it makes in the program.

The evaluators may choose to use the lunch time to meet independently, for the purpose of reviewing records maintained by the program on individual PA residents and their progress through the program.

Depending on the focus of the luncheon period, the afternoon may be used to pursue supplemental information regarding the subject of that focus, as well as the pursuit of information regarding other dimensions of the program during the remaining afternoon hours.

1 hour **Interviews With Members of the Faculty and Preceptors**

Purpose: To discuss individually and sequentially, with principal instructors for any didactic courses and supervised units of instruction which are designed to teach clinical skills, the course selection and content, the instructional objectives and methods, the frequency and means of assessing and reporting to PA residents on their progress, and related information. The conversations should allow the visitors to assess the preceptor's understanding of their teaching responsibility to the PA residents; their contacts with the program administration; their teaching methods; the nature of supervision, direction and evaluation they provide to PA residents in the clinical setting; and the like.

1 hour **Interviews with Current PA Residents**

Purpose: To obtain perceptions of the program from PA residents and to gain an understanding of the organization and quality of instruction they have received. Discussion with PA residents should allow the visitors to obtain their perceptions of the program, the curriculum, the quality of teaching, the types and frequency of evaluation of their progress, their career objectives, major challenges and related topics. Visitors should also obtain impressions of PA residents' practical skills, as well as their clinical understanding, knowledge, and judgment of their limitations and the character of their interaction with others in the clinical setting. (Members of the faculty are not to be present during these conversations)

15 minutes **BREAK**

75 to 90 minutes

Complete review of documents, meet with program director or other core faculty or staff members for clarification of issues before working on report.

Closure:

The site team indicates it has completed its report and is ready to depart the program. The site visit team may take a few moments to express thanks to the program for its assistance in allowing the team to complete its task. Transportation arrangements for the visitors should have been previously arranged.

The ARC-PA does not give an oral exit report at the conclusion of the site visit.

The filed written report submitted by the team will be sent to the program from the ARC-PA within 7-10 days of the visit in most cases.

The program will be offered the opportunity to respond to any of the observations noted in the site visitor evaluation report. The purpose of the program's response is to eliminate errors of fact, or challenge perceived ambiguities and misperceptions.