



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

NOTES TO PROGRAMS

Fall 2017

Notes to Programs is a regular communication from the ARC-PA to accredited programs providing news and commission meeting outcomes from the Commission and ARC-PA staff. Past editions of Notes to Programs can be found on the ARC-PA web site (<http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/resources/notes-and-portal-updates/>).

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE ARC-PA DEADLINE DECEMBER 15, 2017

All accredited PA programs must complete data entry for the required **annual report** in sufficient time to activate the *SUBMIT* button on the Portal dashboard by **December 15, 2017**. The SUBMIT button will appear on the dashboard November 27, 2017. (Reports for programs first accredited in September 2017 are due March 31, 2018.)

Remember to make sure all of your program information is up-to-date before hitting the “submit” button. Once you hit the submit button your final report data will be submitted as entered and becomes the document of record.

The *SCPE Directions* document is available at <http://www.arc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SCPE-portal-directions-for-completion-and-reports-Sept-2016-FNL-rev.pdf>. This document addresses entering data into the SCPE tab and creating Excel spreadsheets for required reports to the ARC-PA.

ARC-PA WORKSHOPS

The ARC-PA **Workshop on Accreditation** will be held on **July 22nd – 24th, 2018**, at the Ritz-Carlton, in Cleveland, Ohio. The workshop will provide PA program faculty an overview of the accreditation process including sessions designed to give participants the opportunity to ask questions and discuss interpretation of individual *Standards*.

The *Accreditation and You* workshop begins at noon Sunday, July 22, 2018 and will adjourn at noon Tuesday, July 24, 2018. An optional *Overview of Accreditation* for new faculty is included in the workshop fee and will be held Sunday morning, July 22, 2018.

Space is limited. Priority will be given to first time registrants from programs scheduled for site visits in 2018-2019. Programs are limited to two attendees per program.

More information will be posted on the ARC-PA website as it becomes available.

Entering the ARC-PA Provisional Accreditation Pathway

The ARC-PA will hold a *Provisional Pathway Conference* in Atlanta, Thursday and Friday, January 18-19, 2018 for provisional applicant programs on the 2019 and early 2020 agendas. The conference will be held

again in 2019 for programs on future agendas and for individuals involved in the planning of new PA programs. More information regarding the location, time, and fees for the 2019 conference will be posted on the ARC-PA website as it becomes available.

Information about conferences and workshops sponsored by the ARC-PA can be found on the ARC-PA website: <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/resources/workshops-and-conferences/>.

STANDARDS REVIEW AND REVISION

The ARC-PA has begun the multi-year *Standards* review and revision process. Stakeholder feedback has been sought via email, surveys and open forums at PAEA. The Standards committee is meeting regularly, and has a goal for the first draft of the revised Standards to be ready for stakeholder review in September 2018. Stay tuned for updates over the coming year.

INTERPRETING THE STANDARDS

Standard E1.09d requires programs to receive approval from the ARC-PA, using forms and processes developed by the ARC-PA, no less than six months prior any increase above the approved ***maximum entering class size***.

The approved maximum entering class size is the number of students **newly enrolled** for each admission cycle. Students joining a class cohort who began with different cohort (due to deceleration or leave of absence) may be an addition to the number of students in the approved maximum entering class.

The 'Should' Standards:

The term '*should*' is used to designate requirements that *must* be met **unless there is a compelling reason**, acceptable to the ARC-PA, for not complying. Programs not meeting any component of a '*should*' standard are **expected to describe in detail why they are unable to do so**. Programs are expected to provide this detail, including attempts to meet the standard, **in the appropriate application narrative**. The commission reviews the application to evaluate the reason(s) a program may provide for not meeting each '*should*' standard.

A program or institution may be cited for failing to comply with a requirement that includes the term '*should*'.

CHANGE IN APPEAL FEES

At its September 2017 meeting, the ARC-PA made an adjustment to appeal fees. The fee for reconsideration following an adverse action by the commission will remain \$5,000. The fee for a formal appeal hearing will increase from \$8,000 to \$12,500. This fee adjustment will be effective January 1, 2018.

PANCE REQUIRED REPORTS FOR LOW FIRST TIME TAKER PASS RATES 2018

The ARC-PA continues to review the PANCE first time pass rate percentages by student cohort. Any program with a PANCE pass rate percentage of 85% or less for the 2017 graduating cohort must submit an analysis of PANCE performance to the ARC-PA **by July 1, 2018**. The NCCPA usually provides programs their previous year's data in February.

The basis for the report is the ARC-PA's Four Key Elements of Analysis which can be found in the [Data Analysis Resource](#) on the ARC-PA Resources web page. The **report form** is available on the [Resources page](#) of the ARC-PA web site: <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/resources/>

ARC-PA STAFF CHANGES

Lynn Downer-Goss, the ARC-PA meeting manager retired October 31, 2017 after ten years at the ARC-PA. Lynn began with the ARC-PA in 2007 with only John McCarty and Laura Stuetzer, managing 139 programs. She worked many hours a week including Saturdays to keep up with the workload. It wasn't until November of 2010 that two people were added to the ARC-PA office. Over the years, her duties began to change with each added staff member. She's been the Meeting Manager for the last couple of years. Lynn says she has truly enjoyed her time with the ARC-PA but now it's time to finally relax and "do what I want, when I want. A new chapter and a new adventure!"

Everyone at the ARC-PA will miss Lynn who always made sure we were well taken care of during our meetings. Sonia Ratliff will be taking over meeting management for the time being. We wish Lynn well as she embarks on her retirement years.

Victoria Love joined the ARC-PA in March 2017 as Executive Assistant to the Executive Director. Victoria has worked as an assistant for 35 years in law firms and in the corporate offices of some of the most recognized brands in the world (like Coca-Cola, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company and Blackberry). She very much enjoys working for ARC-PA, saying it is refreshing to work in a non -profit environment that is all about promoting education and protecting students.

Sonia S. Ratliff, MBA, MSA, joined the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant in August 2017. She is currently responsible for all the financial/accounting, human resources, and IT functions of the organization. Prior to joining the ARC-PA on a full-time basis, Ms. Ratliff was the Vice President of Finance and HR for the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Inc. and a financial consultant for the ARC-PA.

Richard Mercer joined the ARC-PA on October 10, 2017 as Manager of IT. Richard has over 26 years of professional IT experience covering all aspects of the field, from help desk to project lead and development management. Richard believes systems should not just be tools, but assistants to advise on business processes, making people more productive. He has enjoyed his time so far with the ARC-PA team and looks forward to together making the systems at ARC-PA the best they can be.

POST-GRADUATE PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

Accreditation of post-graduate residency programs was placed in abeyance in 2014. At its September 2017 meeting, the ARC-PA decided to consult with the leaders of the 4-orgs to determine the profession's interest in continuing accreditation of PA post-graduate residency programs. The 4-orgs confirmed that post-graduate residency programs are likely to be needed as the profession progresses. The ARC-PA will begin to accredit PA post-graduate residency programs again, with the goal of having a new, streamlined accreditation process by 2019. Currently accredited post-graduate programs will receive information from the ARC-PA detailing their status following the lifting of the abeyance.

ARC-PA HAS GONE PAPERLESS

The ARC-PA has completed revision of its documents, including applications and required reports, to reflect the change to a paperless way of life. You will notice that submission instructions ask programs to submit reports via stick drive, email or by uploading to the portal, depending on the document type. Programs that have an application or report due in the coming months have been **contacted directly with any change in submission instructions**.

Please note that all programs with an accreditation site visit are instructed to have one hardcopy of their application available at the time of the site visit for the visitors' use.

We feel strongly that this move to a paperless world will simplify some of our processes and will be of benefit to programs and the ARC-PA.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

DOCUMENTS RELATED TO SITE VISITS - ON THE ARC-PA WEBSITE

The **Site Visit Protocol and Planning** page of the ARC-PA web site <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/site-visits/site-visit-protocol/> contains information designed to help program directors and faculty organize documents and prepare for a site visit. The *Information Summary Sheet* programs must submit eight (8) weeks prior to the site visit is also linked to this page.

The pages for both **Provisional Accreditation Site Visits** <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/site-visits/provisional-accreditation-site-visit-schedule/> and **Continuing Accreditation Site Visits** <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/site-visits/continuing-accreditation-site-visit-schedule/> have documents to be used for planning for a visit. Agenda templates linked to the pages vary by type of program review so programs are cautioned to read the web pages carefully.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES SUMMARY

The ARC-PA has several documents created to provide guidance to programs. Programs are encouraged to consider these resources over the course of their program planning and not just in relation to accreditation activities. All of these are listed and available on the [Resources](http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/resources/) section of the web site at <http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation/resources/>

- Program Expectations (updated to parallel the March 2016 changes to the *Standards*)
- Analysis and the SSR
- SCPE Directions for the Portal
- PANCE Required Report
- Syllabi, Competencies, Objectives
- Notes to Programs (yes, these and all past copies are maintained here)
- Portal Pointers

Sample application materials (including sample SSR applications) can be found on the Resources pages of the website also.

The presentation on *Completing the Self-Study Report* given at the 2017 PAEA Forum is also posted on the Manuals and Guides page of the website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: EXCERPTS FROM JULY AND SEPTEMBER 2017 MEETINGSAccreditation Actions as of September 10, 2017

Acknowledge program changes: **17** new PD, **10** New IPD, **12** new MD, **1** IMD

Action Taken On:

- 19** Continuing program applications
- 5** Provisional program applications
- 7** Provisional monitoring applications
- 4** Final Provisional - Moving from provisional accreditation
- 0** Focused visit
- 3** Probation visits
- 1** Expansion to a Distant Campus application
- 0** Postgraduate third year renewal reports
- 3** Program changes (class size increase)
- 9** Program reports due

Expedited Reviews – Total **69** reviews: 56 reports due; **14** program changes

6 Referred to full commission

18 Program Informational items

([Accreditation actions](#) are posted on the ARC-PA web site after each meeting, after all programs have been notified of commission decisions and time for any appeals has occurred.)

The total number of accredited PA programs as of September 10, 2017 is **229**

The total number of accredited **clinical postgraduate** programs at present is **8**.

There are **23** programs with an accreditation status of Accreditation-Probation

There are **63** programs with an accreditation status of Accreditation-Provisional

Projected Workload

- The current projected workload includes an additional **62** new PA programs for initial provisional accreditation consideration through September 2021.
- While the need for PA healthcare providers remains strong, the commission remains concerned about the availability of clinical education sites for all types of healthcare students and requests that our collaborating organizations, when possible, promote to their members participation in clinical education. The ability of current and emerging programs to recruit qualified program leadership and faculty also remains worrisome to the commission.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Programs that have questions or comments about these **Notes** or any issue related to the accreditation process are encouraged to contact the ARC-PA by email. Contact information is posted on the ARC-PA web site at <http://www.arc-pa.org/contact/staff/>