



Physician Associate/Assistant: Friend or Foe?

General Practice Conference: Rotorua Sat, June 13th, 2015

George Froehle PA-C
President

What's A PA?

- A health care professional who can:
 - take histories
 - do physical exams
 - order tests/images
 - interpret test/images
 - diagnosis
 - prescribe (Not yet in NZ)
- Under the supervision of a doctor



How are PAs Trained?

Most PAs do a 3 yr program in an accredited Medical University

- Trained by doctors for doctors.
 - 2 yrs didactic classroom.
 - 1 yr clinical rotations
- National Certification Exam
 - 100 hrs CME/Annually
 - Re-certify every 10 yrs

PAs must have worked in the health sector before admission to a PA program.



Supervising MD & PA Team:



Scope of Practice:

PAs may only provide those services that they are competent to perform based on their education, training, and experience and which are consistent with this delegation agreement. The supervising MD(s) and the PA shall determine which procedures may be performed and the degree of supervision under which the PA performs the procedure.

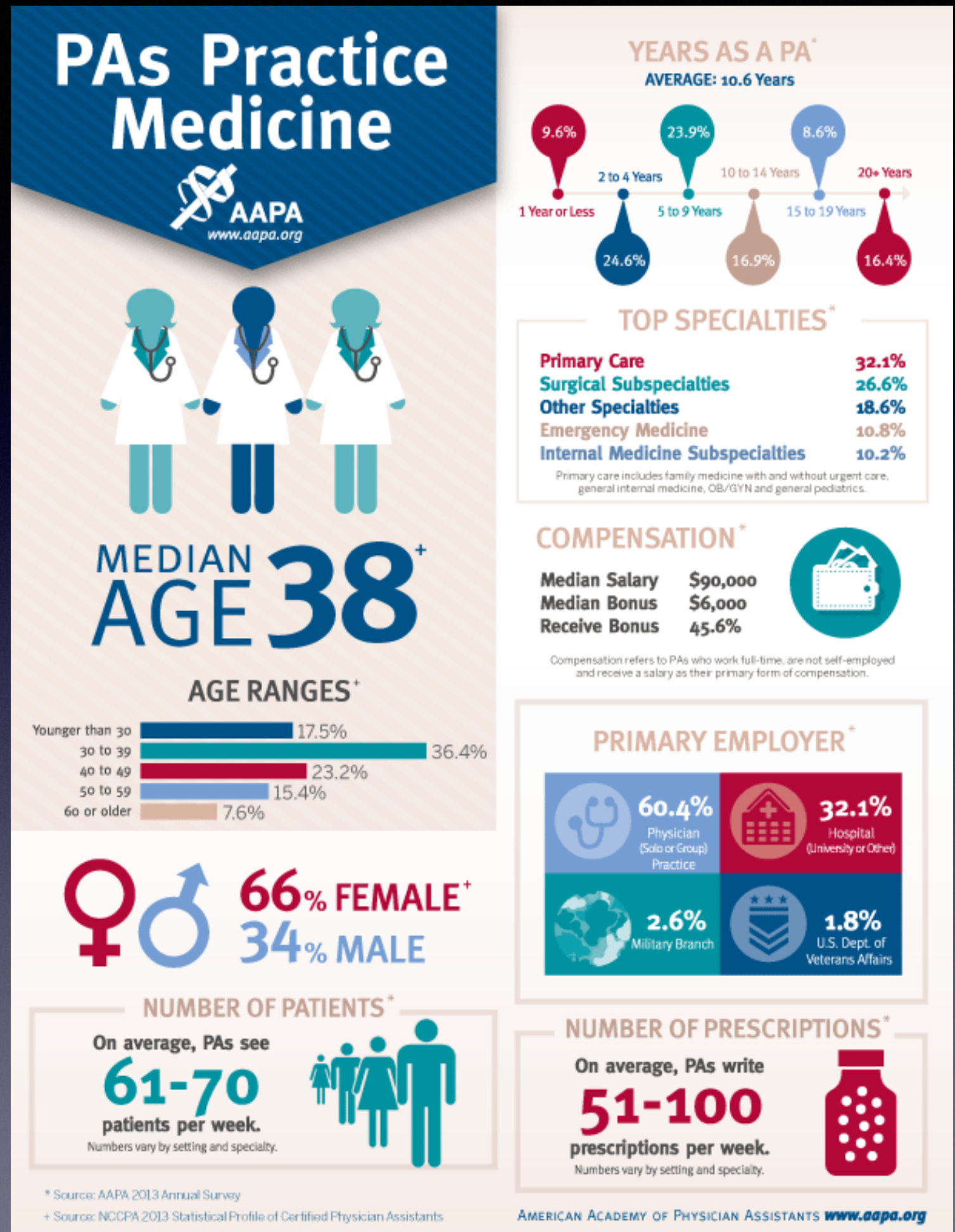
The supervising physician for any physician assistant must not allow that PA to practice in any area of medicine or surgery that is beyond the MD's own usual scope of expertise and practice.

-WA State Dept of Health MD/PA Scope of Practice Agreement Plan

Who are PAs?

PAs now practice in:

USA
Canada
Netherlands
UK
Australia
S. Africa
Ghana
China
Ireland
Taiwan



PA GROWTH

The Forbes logo, featuring the word "Forbes" in a white serif font on a blue rectangular background.

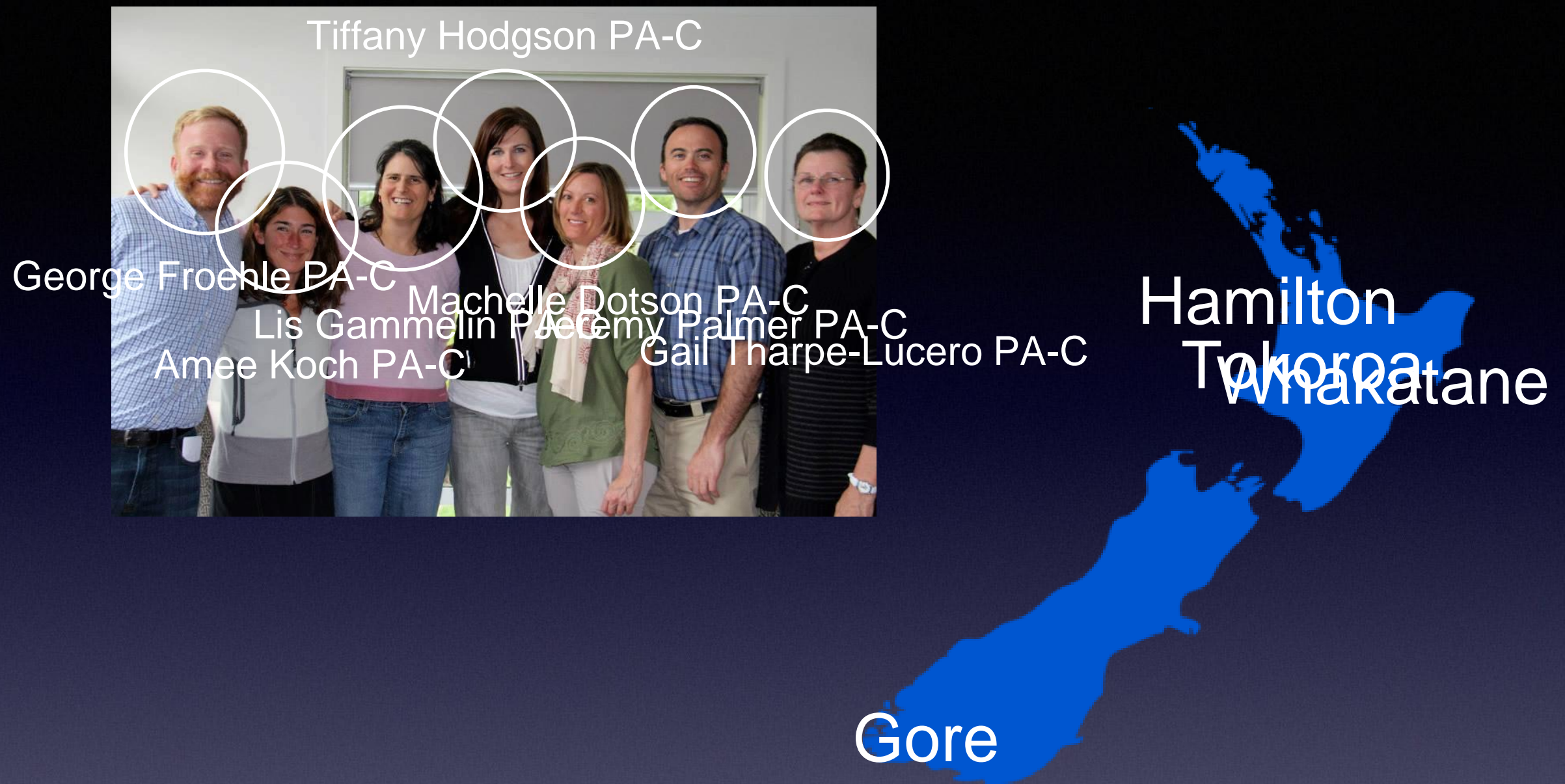
2015 & 2012 -
Listed as #1 master's degree job

The CNN Money logo, featuring the CNN logo (a stylized "CNN" in a dark blue font) on a white square background.

Money

2010 & 2009 -
Listed 2nd best job in
USA

Physician assistants have a median salary of \$90,930 per year and a whopping 38 percent projected job growth from 2012-2022, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



PAs in New Zealand

2013 Health Workforce NZ & Ministry of Health launch a
PA Pilot study.

Study Design/Evaluation:

Evaluation done by Synergia

Dr. Sarah Appleton-Dyer, Dr. Adrian Field, Linden Dale-Gandar, Angela Boswell, Dr. Matthew Wright, Faith Mahony, and Grant Hanham

- Answer the following questions:
 - How have PAs integrated with practice activities and service models?
 - What was the impact and contributory value of the PA role for patient outcomes, service quality and business models at the demonstration sites; within this, have the PAs extended or changed the practice model?
 - What factors supported or challenged the integration of the PA role into local practices and with specific professional groups?
 - What are the implications and/or risks for the fit and applicability of the PA role within New Zealand, arising from the evaluation findings?
 - What issues arise from the demonstrations for the potential establishment, transferability and sustainability of the PA role in New Zealand?


Evaluation Methods:

- Two sets of site visits to each of the demonstration sites to conduct key stakeholder interviews, supplemented by some telephone interviews; a total of 60 interviews were conducted.
- Staff and patient surveys at each site; a total of 511 patients were surveyed and 65 staff were surveyed.
- An analysis of routinely collected administrative and clinical data.
- *The breadth of the data collected for this evaluation is on par with, and in many cases exceeds that collected in overseas studies.*

Stay Tuned: Data Still
Embargoed. Expected
Release Mid-Late June.

What can we gleam:


- Are PAs well accepted by patients?
- Are PAs safe?
- Do PAs make good business sense?

radius
medical 

Physician Assistant pilot

Meet our newest team member, Physician Assistant George

George comes to us from Seattle Washington, America to be part of the Physician Assistant Ministry of health pilot program. In America he worked as a physician assistant in general practice. He holds a Bachelor of Health Sciences and is Physician Assistant certified.



What is a Physician Assistant (PA's)

Physician Assistants are highly trained healthcare professionals who work as a part of the medical team.

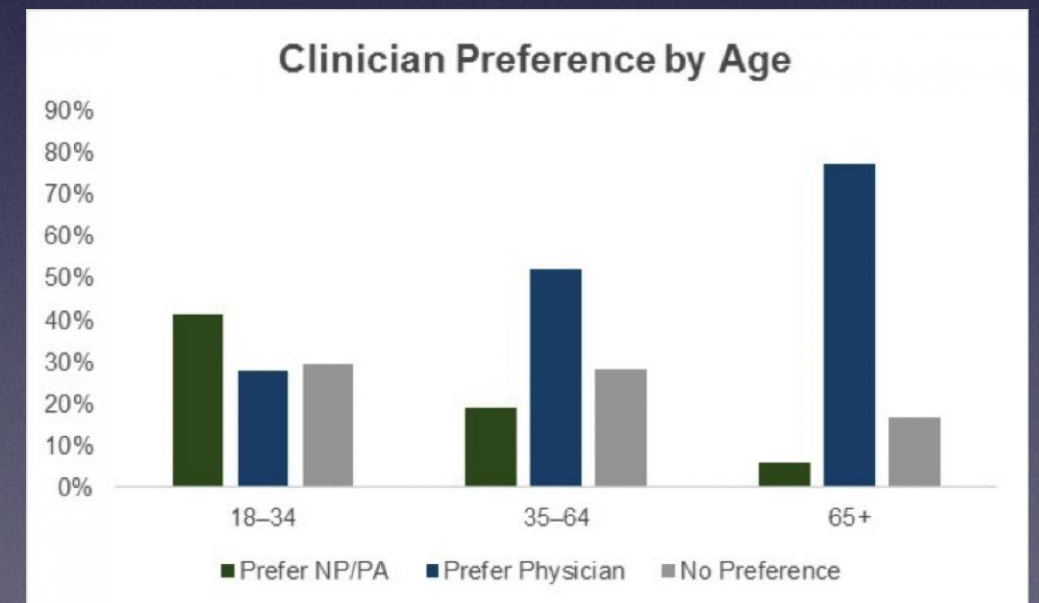
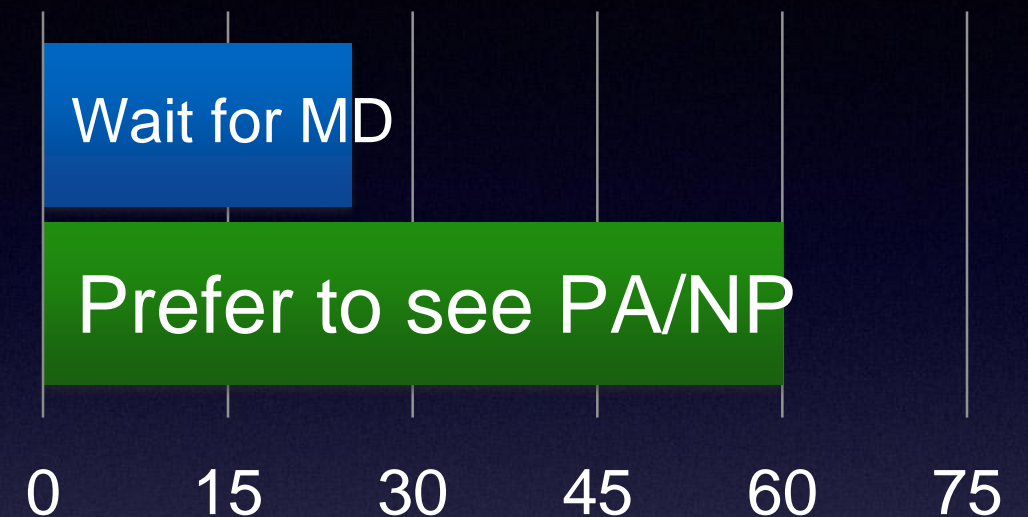
- PA's are trained under the medical model like doctors and are hired to work as an extension of a doctor under the doctors' delegation.
- They have existed in the U.S. for over 50 years.
- The Physician Assistant will introduce themselves and get permission to complete thier tasks.
- You have the right to refuse to be seen by the Physician Assistant at any time.
- PA's typically obtain medical histories, perform examinations and procedures, diagnose illnesses, prescribe medication, order and interpret diagnostic tests, refer patients to specialists as required and first or second-assist in surgery.

Because New Zealand is currently trialling Physician Assistants as a part of the medical team there will be limitations on their scope of practice during the pilot.

If you have any questions regarding the Physician Assistant pilot please feel free to ask at reception.

Patient Acceptability:

- The NZ trial found no concerns amongst pt's seeing a PA compared to an NP or MD.
- Nearly all pt's reported a favorable experience by PAs.
- Most patients felt the PA was providing them with quality care.
- Pt's felt comfortable referring family and friends to see the PA.
- *This is in line with studies conducted in the US.*



Are PA's Safe?

- **Yes: Safe as...**
 - Over 30,000 pt's seen in NZ without a single incident.
 - US trials have shown that PAs have less malpractice suites than MDs and an MD/PA team have fewer malpractice suites than an MD practicing without a PA.
 - 1 malpractice payment per 32.5 PAs vs. 1 per 2.5 physicians. 12 x more payments for MDs than PAs.

- 2015 Davis et al, Annals of Health Law; Access and Innovation in a Time of Rapid Change: Physician Assistant Scope of Practice.

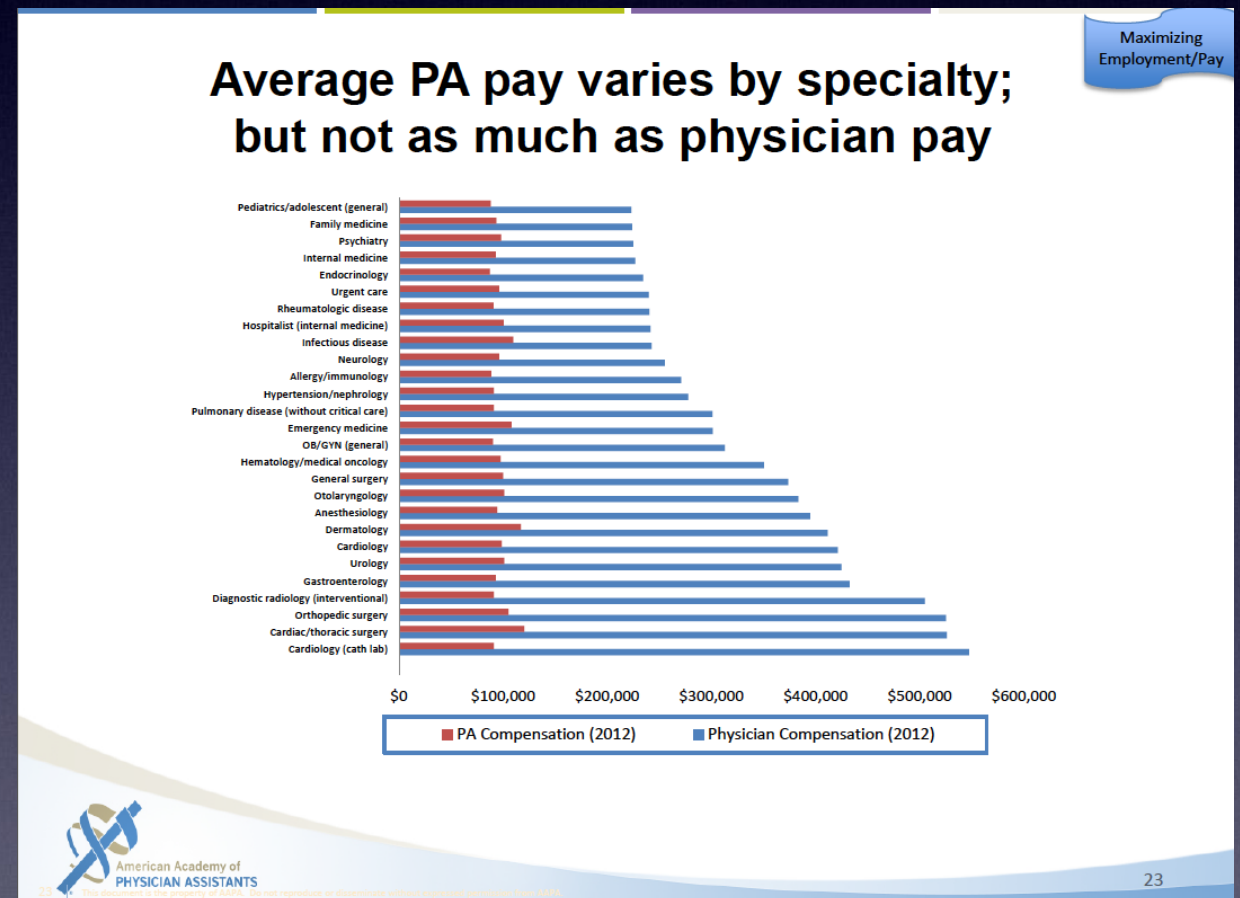


Are PAs good for Business?

- **Yes**
- *“If you look at the value you get from PAs in terms of salary and the income that they generate, from a business point of view they’re an excellent alternative for GP owners to still service the patients, but for better value on their return.”*

GP Practice Owner from NZ

- PA salaries in NZ ranged from \$75,000-\$126,000
- PAs saw on average 2.6-4.4 pts/hr depending on site and complexity of pts.



Challenges Identified:

- *Prescribing*
- Supervision was not representative of PA model.
- Site preparation is vital.



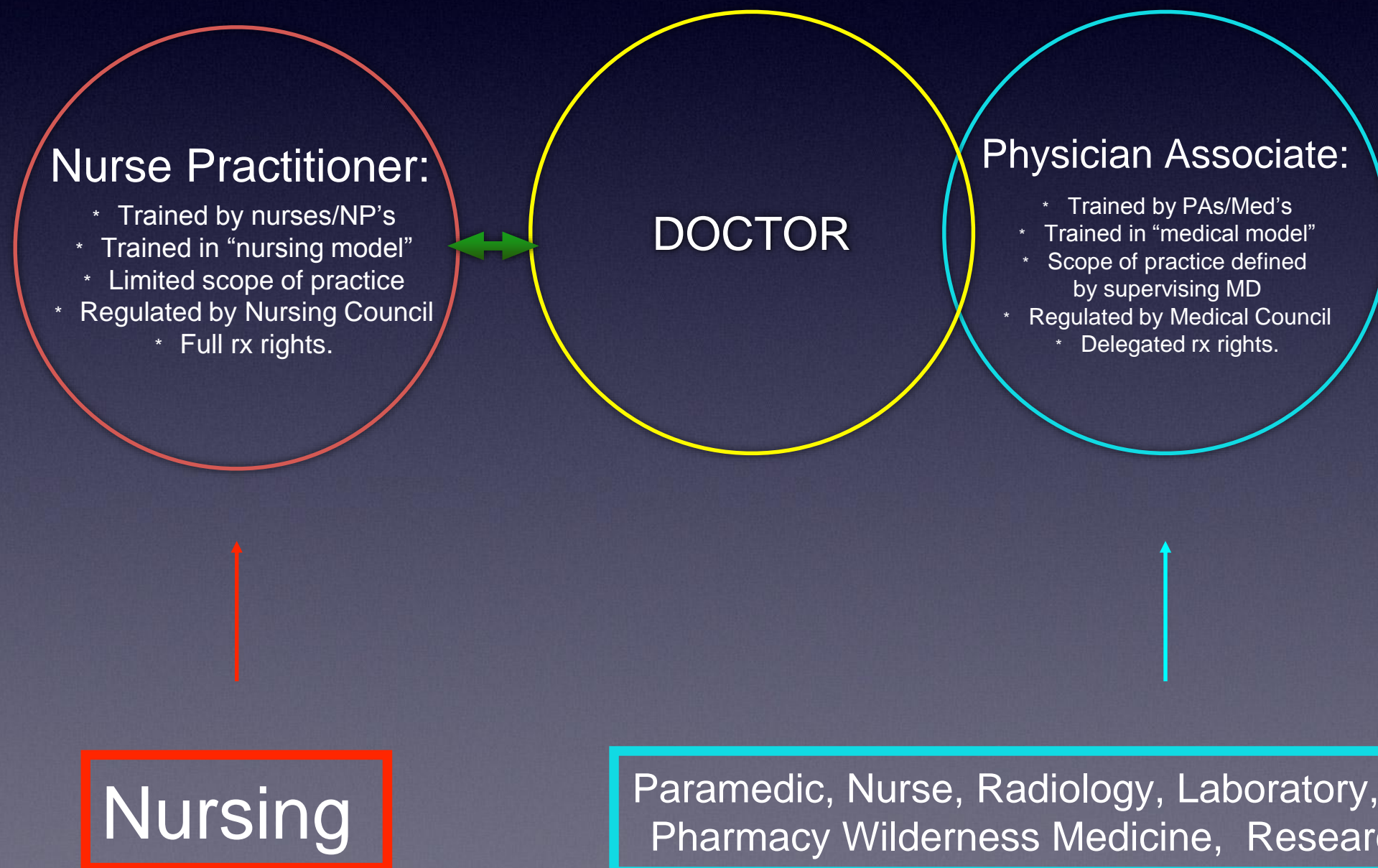
Need for PAs?

- HWNZ:
 - Shortages in GP, general surgery, internal medicine, pathology, psychiatry and rural hospital medicine.
 - Aged workforce, with almost 40% of doctors currently 50 or over.
 - Increased interest in specialization amongst NZ MD graduates.



Physician Associates: Friend or Foe?

PA & NP



PA & Junior Doctors

- Junior Doctors

- Typically short term.
- Still in training.
- Typically looking for urban opportunities.

- Physician Associates

- Long-term.
- Done with training, in supervision/continue medical education.
- Long history of providing rural/underserved/urban opportunities.

The future of PAs in NZ...

- NZPAS - formed in 2013
- New PA's on the way!
- Regulation document being written with NZMA.
- Probable regulation under Medical Council.
- Probable delegated prescribing rights.



Thank you!

- Health Workforce NZ
 - Tony Crane
- NZ Medical Association
 - Lesley Clarke
- New Zealand Medical Council
- Radius Medical
 - Navin Rajan
- Midlands Health Network
 - Helen Parker
- Gore Health
 - Karl Metzler
- Synergia
- Ruth Balweg - Director of PA Global Development
- Physician Associates in the trial.

