



Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants

P. O. Box 128
Greensburg, PA 15601

724-836-6411 phone
724-836-4449 fax

pspa@pspa.net
www.pspa.net
www.pspacareers.net

Dear Senator Dan Laughlin and members of the Senate Majority Policy Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide information about ensuring patients get the health care they need and to provide data about patient access in Pennsylvania.

A new Harris Poll took a look at Pennsylvania's healthcare system to capture issues patients are facing when seeking out the healthcare resources they need. Thirty-four percent of Pennsylvania adults report that the healthcare system fails to meet their needs in some way – for example, taking too long to get an appointment, cost concerns, or complicated care coordination. Often, scheduling medical appointments can involve frustrating travel and wait times.

As a physician assistant (PA), I've seen firsthand how timely healthcare impacts treatment and patient success. Pennsylvania patients wait on average of 4 weeks for medical appointments, this is simply too long.

On the upside, the Harris Poll survey demonstrated broad public support for one readily available solution: mobilizing our PA workforce. Of Pennsylvania adults who have been seen by a PA, 91% believe PAs are part of the solution to this healthcare workforce shortage. By removing administrative barriers, we can increase patients' access to care and improve satisfaction with our state's healthcare system.

In our Commonwealth, there is a real need to update several outdated, unnecessary regulations that can hinder a healthcare team's ability to fully utilize PAs. With modernized laws, the more than 10,639 Pennsylvania PAs could do more to help address the healthcare challenges our Commonwealth is facing.

PAs are committed to doing our part to improve healthcare in our communities, but we know we can't do it alone. I encourage policymakers and all healthcare providers to read this latest report from the Harris Poll and to bring additional solutions to the table. Pennsylvania patients had a lot to say about their healthcare needs. Let's listen to them.

The Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants looks forward to future discussions with Pennsylvania legislators on proposed solutions.

Sincerely,

Mark DeSantis, PA-C
Chairman, Governmental Affairs Committee
Pennsylvania Society of PAs