

Non-doctor providers – what's the difference between a NP and a PA?

A Nurse Practitioner is a registered nurse (RN) who also has a Master's degree and clinical experience. A NP chooses a particular specialty during their training and works under the supervision of a physician. NPs can have their own patient panels and can write prescriptions in most states. They are trained in the nursing model.

A Physician Assistant is a licensed professional who has passed the national certificated exam that is administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. They do not choose a specialty during training, but complete a clinical rotation through various specialties. PAs work under the supervision of a physician, can have their own patient panels and can write prescriptions in most states. They are trained in the medical model.

NPs and PAs are also called:

- mid-level providers (MLPs)
- physician extenders
- non-physician providers (NPPs)