

Survey of Breastfeeding Curriculum in Physician Assistant Education

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The benefits of breastfeeding are well documented. In 2011, the Surgeon General's Call to Action specifically identified physician assistants (PAs) and their role in supporting breastfeeding. However, breastfeeding is not included on the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) exam blueprint that serves as a guide for PA program curriculums. There is a discrepancy between the Surgeon General's expectation and what is required in PA curriculum. We conducted a cross sectional survey asking PA educators about their breastfeeding curriculum. Results identified a variety of teaching methods and topics included in PA breastfeeding curriculum as well as barriers, including the omission on the NCCPA blueprint. Additionally, 79 percent of programs were unaware of the Call to Action. The results support the need for a change in the NCCPA blueprint and a consistent teaching method so that PAs are able to meet the needs of breastfeeding mothers and infants.