



# Information about Physician Assistant



## GENERAL INFORMATION

Physician assistants (PAs) practice medicine under the supervision of physicians and surgeons. They should not be confused with medical assistants, who perform routine clinical and clerical tasks. PAs are formally trained to provide diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive healthcare services, as delegated by a physician. Working as members of the healthcare team, they take medical histories, examine and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory tests and x-rays, and make diagnoses. They also treat minor injuries by suturing, splinting, and casting. PAs record progress notes, instruct and counsel patients, and order or carry out therapy. In 48 States and the District of Columbia, physician assistants may prescribe medications.

Physician assistants work under the supervision of a physician. However, PAs may be the principal care providers in rural or inner city clinics, where a physician is present for only 1 or 2 days each week. In such cases, the PA confers with the supervising physician and other medical professionals as needed and as required by law. PAs also may make house calls or go to hospitals and nursing care facilities to check on patients and report back to the physician.

All States and the District of Columbia have legislation governing the qualifications or practice of physician assistants. All jurisdictions require physician assistants to pass the Physician Assistants National Certifying Examination, administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and open only to graduates of accredited PA education programs. Only those successfully completing the examination may use the credential "Physician Assistant-Certified." In order to remain certified, PAs must complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every 2 years. Every 6 years, they must pass a recertification examination or complete an alternative program combining learning experiences and a take-home examination.

PA education includes classroom instruction in biochemistry, pathology, human anatomy, physiology, microbiology, clinical pharmacology, clinical medicine, geriatric and home healthcare, disease prevention, and medical ethics. Students obtain supervised clinical training in several areas, including family medicine, internal medicine, surgery, prenatal care and gynecology, geriatrics, emergency medicine, psychiatry, and pediatrics. Sometimes, PA students serve one or more of these "rotations" under the supervision of a physician who is seeking to hire a PA. These rotations often lead to permanent employment.

This information is adapted and quoted from [www.bls.gov/oco/ocos081.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos081.htm) [November 2009]

## TRAINING PROGRAMS

### MEDEX:

In the Pacific Northwest, MEDEX (associated with the University of Washington) provides education and training culminating in a Master's degree for Physician Assistant. (This program begins with the entering class of Fall, 2009.) The training combines didactic (classroom and lab) and clinical training. To be considered for admission, applicants must have:

- **Clinical Experience: 2 Years** (4000 hours) minimum as a nurse or paramedic;
- **Baccalaureate Degree** (no major preference);
- 10 quarter (6 semester) credits in Human Anatomy and Physiology (preferred with in the last 5 years) minimum GPA 3.0;
- 15 quarter (9 semester) credits in other medically related sciences, i.e. biology, microbiology, chemistry. Minimum GPA 3.0.

The application process requires careful attention and early preparation. Go to the MEDEX website for more information:

MEDEX Northwest  
[www.washington.edu/medicine/som/depts/medex/](http://www.washington.edu/medicine/som/depts/medex/)  
Roosevelt Commons Building  
4311 11th Avenue NE, Suite 200  
Seattle, WA 98105-4608  
Phone: (206) 616-4001 Fax: (206) 616-3889  
Email: [medex@u.washington.edu](mailto:medex@u.washington.edu)

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### OTHER PROGRAMS:

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Oregon Health Sciences University  
Mailcode GH219  
3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Road  
Portland OR 97239-3098  
503.494.1484 Email: [paprgm@ohsu.edu](mailto:paprgm@ohsu.edu)  
[www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/schools/som/pa](http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/schools/som/pa)

Master of Physician  
Assistant Studies

Pacific University  
2043 College Way  
Forest Grove OR 97116  
[www.pacificu.edu/pa](http://www.pacificu.edu/pa)

Master of Science in  
Physician Assistant  
Studies

## OPTIONS AT EVCC

### MEDEX:

If you do not already have two years of full-time experience in the delivery of health care and current professional credentials, you may consider achieving a credential (certificate or degree) in one of EvCC's programs and then working for two years and completing a baccalaureate degree in order to meet the admission criteria for MEDEX. This should only be done after consultation with MEDEX advisors to determine if it is appropriate.

For example, you may consider EvCC's Nursing program, or the Radiologic Tech program offered in partnership with Bellingham Technical College.

In addition you can pursue courses or an associate degree program that will enable you to enter a university to complete your bachelor's degree.

## OTHER CAREERS IN HEALTHCARE

EvCC provides several pathways to careers in healthcare. Please review our curriculum guides in the following areas:

- Pre-Medicine, Pre-Dental
- Pre-Pharmacy
- Pre-Physical Therapy
- Nursing
- Nursing Assistant Certified
- Radiologic Technology  
(A Bellingham Tech program/partnership)
- Medical Assisting
- Phlebotomy
- Physical Therapist Assistant

## GETTING STARTED AT EVCC

Our Enrollment Services Office provides information about application, advising, orientation and registration for new and continuing students. All prospective and current students are invited to contact the Enrollment Services Office or the Counseling, Advising and Career Center (CACC) if they would like to speak one-to-one with an advisor about getting started. Contact:

- ◆ Enrollment Services, Jackson Ctr, 425-388-9219, [admissions@everettcc.edu](mailto:admissions@everettcc.edu)
- ◆ Counseling, Advising and Career Center, Third Floor, Parks Student Union, 425-388-9263

## PROGRAM ADVISING

Everett Community College does not offer a Physician Assistant program, though you may find that you can complete some courses at EvCC in preparation for such a program elsewhere. We encourage you to consult with an EvCC advisor to discuss options.

- ◆ Fayla Schwartz, Shuksan 117, 425-388-9451  
[fschwartz@everettcc.edu](mailto:fschwartz@everettcc.edu)







## About Everett Community College

Improve your personal skills, discover new ideas, prepare for work and/or university transfer, and improve your career prospects through programs at EvCC.

Each term, about 9,800 students enroll in a wide variety of courses. Day, evening, distance, and workplace-based options are available. Students may enroll on a full-time or part-time basis. EvCC offers two-year associate degrees, short-term certificates, endorsements and industry certifications.

Student life can be active. Currently, EvCC offers athletic programs in basketball, baseball, and soccer, to name a few.

Student clubs range from Phi Theta Kappa (the Honor Society) to the United Native American Council to the International Club to the German Club, and more. Our Student Government and Programs Board are always on the go with activities that make college life fun. There are also opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Student services are designed to support students in their studies, remove barriers, and enrich student life. Financial aid services offer grant and loan opportunities, as well as scholarships. Our Counseling, Advising and Career Center has a rich array of information and personal assistance for students. The Diversity and Equity Center supports student activities and College programs that promote growth and opportunity toward cultural understanding.

Former EvCC students have found employment in business and industry, in community service agencies, in schools, and in other locales. Our transfer students are known to do very well at the UW, WWU and other schools.

### EvCC's University Center

Looking for educational options close to home?

Check out our new University Center, offering a variety of Bachelor's and Master's degrees –

**Right here. Right now.**

[www.uceverett.org](http://www.uceverett.org)

Everett Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam era veteran in its program and activities, or employment. The Vice President of Student Services has been designated to handle inquiries regarding student-related non-discrimination policies and can be reached at 2000 Tower Street, Everett, WA 98201, or by phone at (425)388-9589. The Vice President of Human Resources has been designated to handle employment-related inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and can be reached at 2000 Tower Street, Everett, WA 98201, or by phone at (425)388-9232. This publication is effective **NOVEMBER 2009**. The College reserves the right to change courses, programs, degrees and requirements. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of correct information by routinely checking with Enrollment Services and/or the advisors listed in this publication. Requirements applicable to all certificates and degrees are published in the College Catalog. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to create any offer to contract or any contractual rights.

For more information, call 425-388-9219, Everett Community College, 2000 Tower Street, Everett, WA 98201, [www.everettcc.edu](http://www.everettcc.edu)