

# Georgia Physician Assistant Workforce

Based on 2016 - 2017 Licensure Renewal Data



Georgia Board for Physician Workforce

State of Georgia

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# Acknowledgements

- The report was produced under the direction of LaSharn Hughes, MBA, Executive Director; Andrea Pass, MBA, Analyst; G.E. Alan Dever, MD PhD, Consultant; Jocelyn Hart, Administrative Assistant III; Tommy Kelly, Systems Administrator.
- The Board would like to thank the Georgia Composite Medical Board for providing physician assistant licensure renewal data.
- This document is provided to the Georgia Board members on behalf of Executive Director LaSharn Hughes.

# Executive Summary

The 2017 Physician Assistant profile marks the 3rd year the Georgia Board for Physician Workforce (GBPW) has examined the supply and distribution of Georgia's physician assistants using data from license renewals. The physician assistants data are analyzed by the GBPW and the resulting information is reported on a biennial basis.

- There were 3,811 licensed and practicing physician assistants in Georgia.
- There were 36.5 physician assistants per 100,000 population who were actively practicing in the state of Georgia.
- The top 3 practice settings for physician assistants are hospital-clinics 28.9%, college/universities 20.0% and multi-specialty physician groups 16.7%.
- In Georgia, whites represented 80% of physician assistants, blacks represented 11% and asians represented 5%.
- 968 (25.4%) physician assistants are age 50 and above, of that number 4.6% reported they would retire in 5 years.
- Males represented 38% of physician assistants in Georgia, while females represented 62%.
- The top three primary care/core specialties for physician assistants are family medicine 12.4%, emergency medicine 11.2% and internal medicine 6.4%.
- 22.6% of physician assistants practiced in the anesthesiologist specialty, 12.4% practiced in the family medicine specialty and 10.5% practiced in the emergency medicine specialty.
- There are 30 counties in Georgia with no physician assistants, representing a population of 358,852.
- The top 3 ranked counties for physician assistants are Tift 83.7, Richmond 79.3 and Fulton 76.6 per 100,000.
- The bottom 3 ranked counties for physician assistants are Harris 2.9, Murray 2.5 and Polk 2.4 per 100,000.
- 83.3% of physician assistants reported they work fulltime, 16.7% reported they do not work fulltime.
- 0.5% of physician assistants reported they work for state government; 2.4% reported they work for county government.

# Methods

The survey consists of data for 2016 and 2017 for physician assistants (PAs) as reported by the Georgia Composite Medical Board. The survey is not mandatory to renew the license. Some physician assistants choose to opt out of the survey. The Georgia Board for Physicians Workforce (GBPW) compiles, validates and analyzes data from the surveys to prepare a report on physician assistant characteristics, supply and demand.

## **Data Set Exclusions**

- Physician assistants licensed but not practicing in Georgia

## **Data Set Inclusions**

- Physician assistants licensed and practicing in Georgia

## **Count of Total Physician Assistants**

The count of total physician assistants methodology was used to determine how many physician assistants are practicing in the state of Georgia.

One (1 ) License Number = One (1 ) Physician Assistant

## **Method:**

If a physician assistant reported that he/she worked in a primary county then he/she was counted as one (1) physician assistant.

If a physician assistant reported that he/she worked in one of the secondary counties but did not work in one of the primary counties then he/she was counted as one (1) physician assistant practicing in the secondary county.

The rate of physician assistants per 100,000 population was then calculated by County.

# Physician Assistants

Physician assistants (PAs) practice medicine with supervising physicians and work in all areas of medicine such as: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology and surgery specialties.

**Selected Characteristics of Physician Assistants**

Table 1

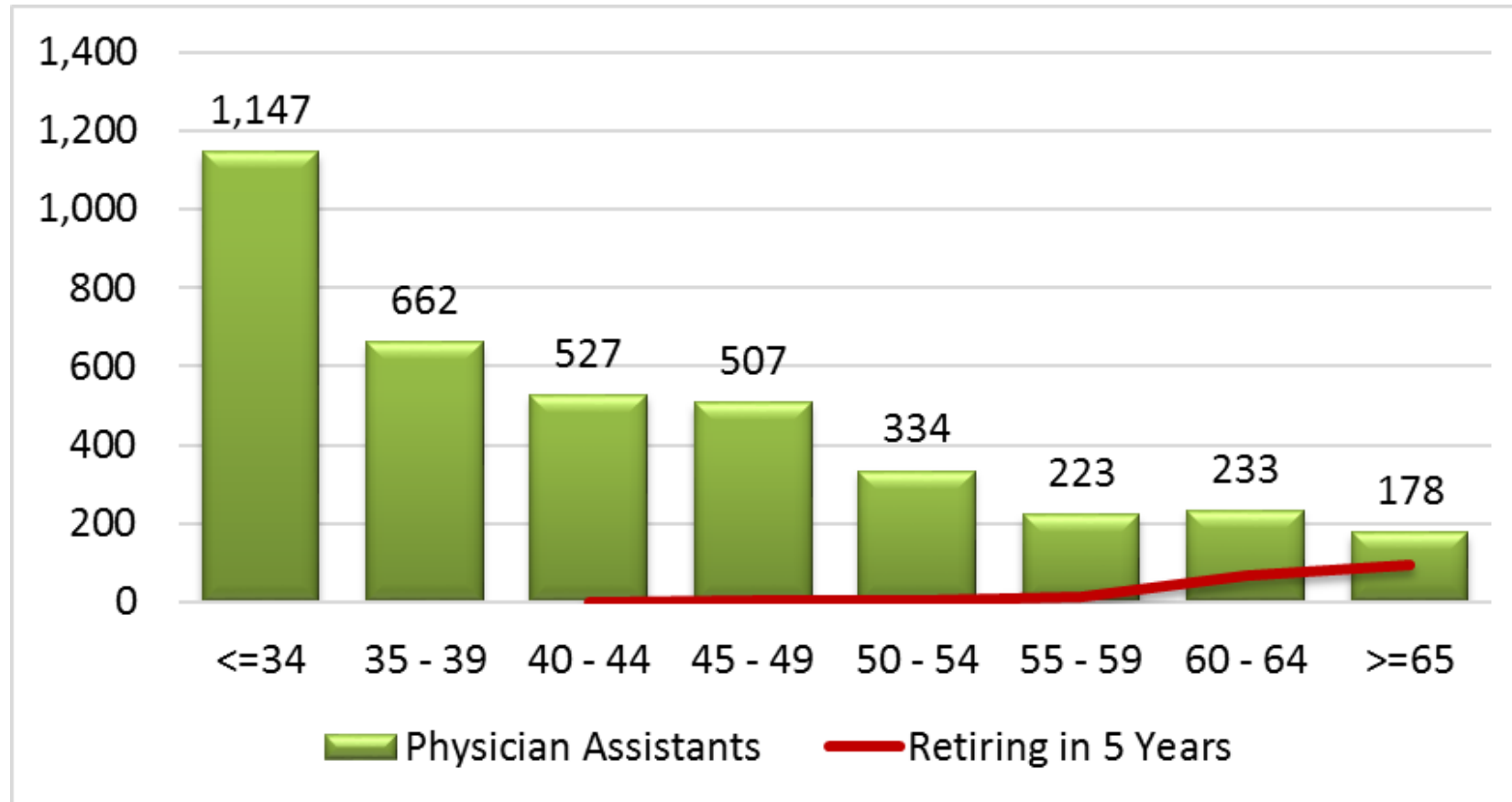
<b>2017 Median Pay</b>	<b>\$104,860 annually</b>
Typical Education	Masters degree
Number of Jobs	106,200 nationally
Job Outlook 2016 - 2026	37% growth nationally

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Physician Assistants. Retrieved <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm> on December 10, 2018.



# Physician Assistants by Age Group and Retiring in 5 Years Georgia 2016 - 2017

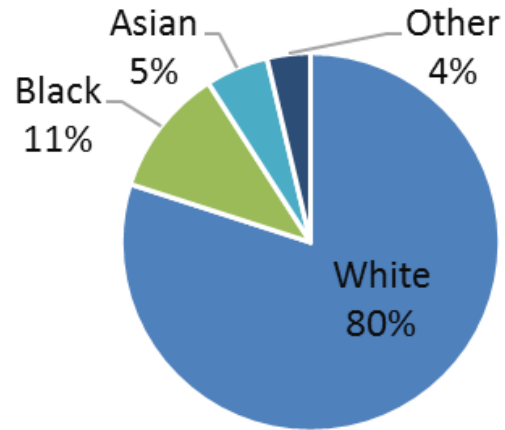
Chart 1



- The two highest age groups for physician assistants were less than 35 (30.1%) and age group 35-39 (17.4%).
- 25.4% of Georgia's physician assistants were age 50 and above; of that number 4.6% reported they would retire in 5 years.

## Physician Assistants by Race Georgia 2016 - 2017

Chart 2

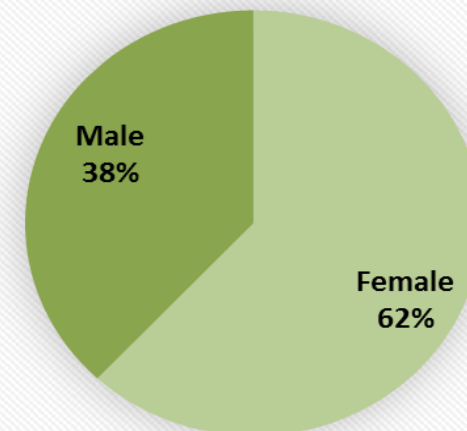


- In 2016 – 2017 whites represented 80% of the physician assistant population.
- Blacks represented 11% of physician assistants.
- Asians represented 5% of physician assistants.

## Physician Assistants by Gender Georgia 2015 - 2016

Chart 3

- In 2016 – 2017 62% of physicians assistants in Georgia were female and males represented 38%.





# Distribution of Primary Care/Core Specialties Physician Assistants by MSA and Non-MSA Georgia 2016 - 2017

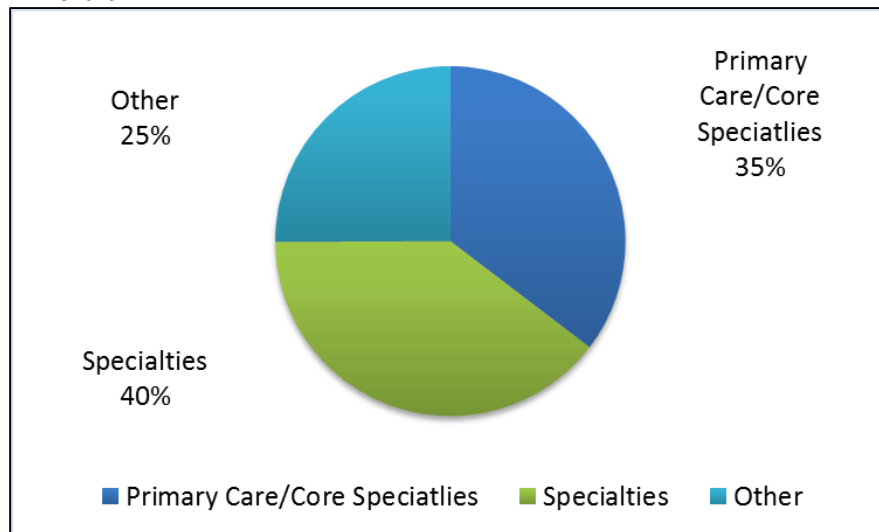
Table 3

Distribution of Primary Care/Core Specialties by MSA/Non-MSA Demographics, Georgia 2016 - 2017					
Specialty	MSA		Non-MSA		Totals by Specialty
	Physician Assistants	Percent	Physician Assistants	Percent	
Family Medicine	330	75.3%	108	24.7%	438
Internal Medicine	170	81.0%	40	19.0%	210
Pediatrics	57	83.8%	11	16.2%	68
OB/GYN	36	81.8%	8	18.2%	44
General Surgery	51	86.4%	8	13.6%	59
Emergency Medicine	278	82.0%	61	18.0%	339
Psychiatry	27	87.1%	4	12.9%	31
<b>Totals</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>79.8%</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>1,189</b>

- 79.8% of physician assistants practiced in a MSA and 20.2% practiced in a Non-MSA.
- The primary care/core specialties with the highest concentration of physician assistants in a MSA are psychiatry, general surgery and pediatrics.

## Physician Assistant Specialty Mix Georgia 2016 - 2017

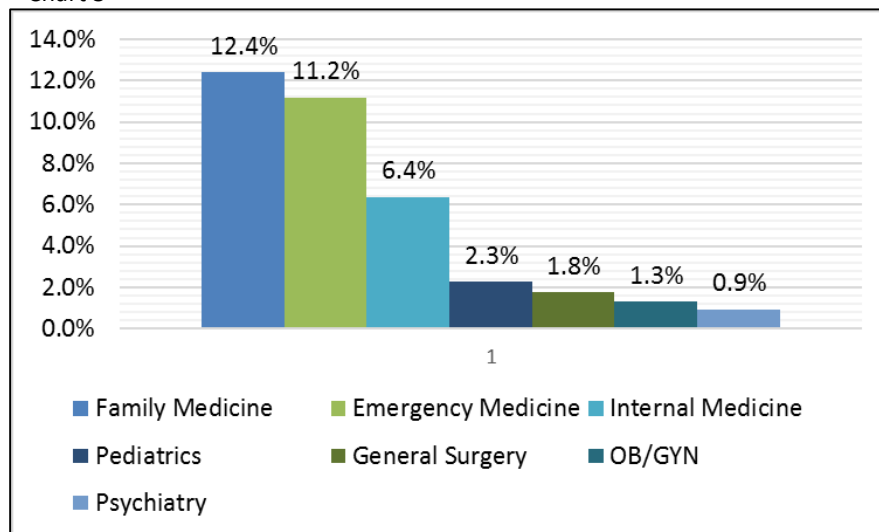
Chart 4



- The specialty mix for physician assistants in primary care/core specialties was 35%, in specialties outside of primary care/core specialties 40% and other 25%.

## Physician Assistants by Primary Care/Core Specialties Georgia 2016 – 2017

Chart 5



- The top three primary care/core specialties for physician assistants were family medicine 12.4%, emergency medicine 11.2% and internal medicine 6.4%.

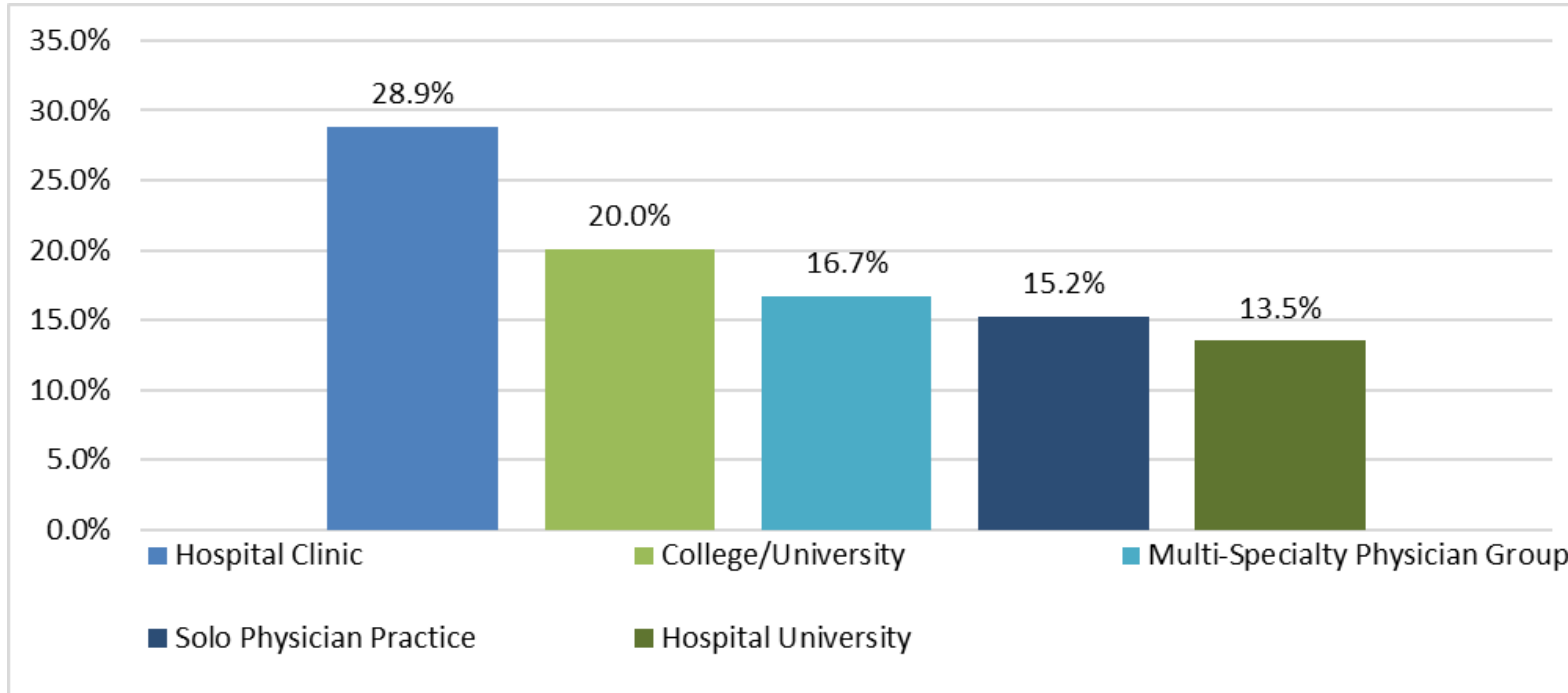
# Physician Assistants by Practice Setting Georgia 2016 - 2017

Table 4

Practice Setting	Number	Percent
Hospital Clinic	1,100	28.9%
College/University	764	20.0%
Multi-Specialty Physician Group	637	16.7%
Solo physician practice	580	15.2%
Hospital University	515	13.5%
Nursing Home or LTC Facility	90	2.4%
HMO	69	1.8%
Physician Practice Management Organization	27	0.7%
Home Health Agency	16	0.4%
Community Health Center	13	0.3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,811</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

# Physician Assistants by Top 5 Practice Settings Georgia 2016 - 2017

Chart 6



➤ The top 5 practice settings for physician assistants were hospital clinic, college university, multi-specialty physician group, solo physician practice and hospital university.

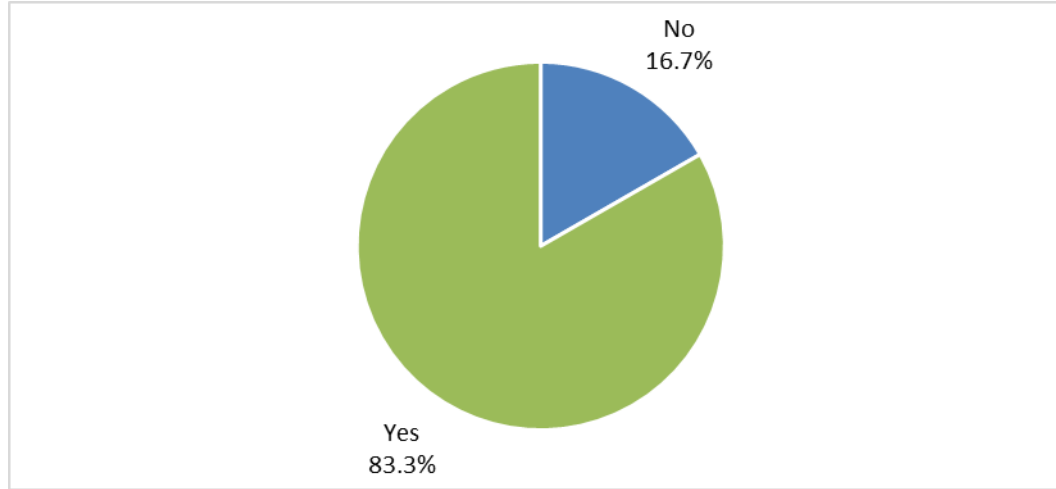
# Distribution of Physician Assistants by Practice Setting and Primary Care/Core Specialty, Number and Percent Georgia 2016 - 2017

Table 5

Core Specialty and Percent	Solo Physician Practice	Multi-Specialty Physician Group	Hospital University	Hospital Clinic	Home Health Agency	HMO	Community Health Center	Nursing Home or LTC Facility	Physician Practice Management Organizatin	College Other
<b>Family Medicine</b>	133	70	6	54	0	35	2	26	13	133
<b>Percent</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>76.5%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>
<b>Internal Medicine</b>	54	42	14	45	2	12	2	6	3	49
<b>Percent</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
<b>Pediatrics</b>	31	12	3	17	3	2	0	3	0	11
<b>Percent</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>37.5%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
<b>OB/GYN</b>	17	7	1	7	1	3	0	2	0	9
<b>Percent</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
<b>Emergency Medicine</b>	9	11	76	193	2	1	0	13	1	96
<b>Percent</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>30.2%</b>
<b>General Surgery</b>	5	25	10	14	0	0	1	0	0	8
<b>Percent</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>Psychiatry</b>	7	3	1	7	0	3	1	0	0	12
<b>Percent</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
<b>Totals</b>	256	170	111	337	8	56	6	50	17	318
<b>Percent</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Physician Assistants Fulltime Status Georgia 2016 - 2017

Chart 7

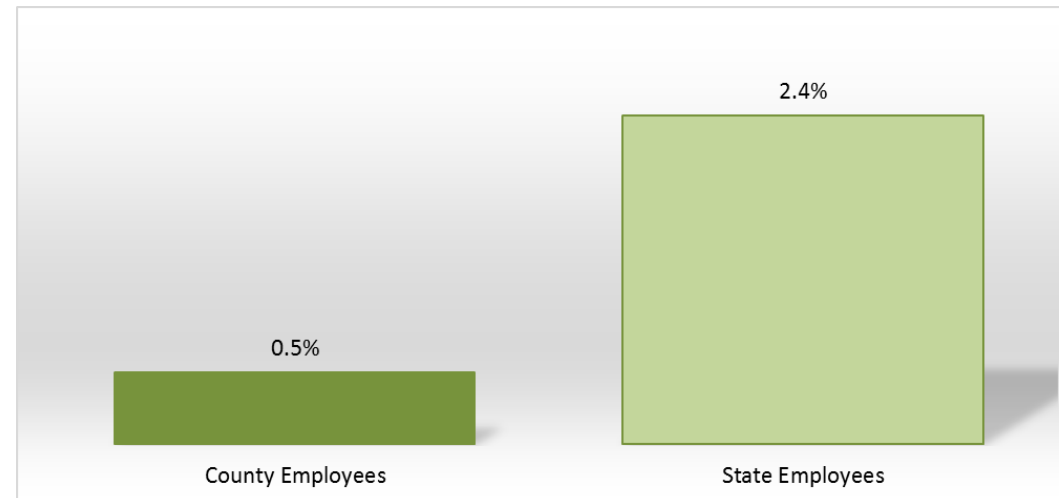


- 83.3% of physician assistants worked fulltime, 16.7% reported they did not work fulltime.
- In Rural Georgia 299 physician assistants reported they work fulltime, 62 reported they do not work fulltime.
- In Non-Rural Georgia 2,512 physician assistants reported they work fulltime, 491 reported they do not work fulltime.

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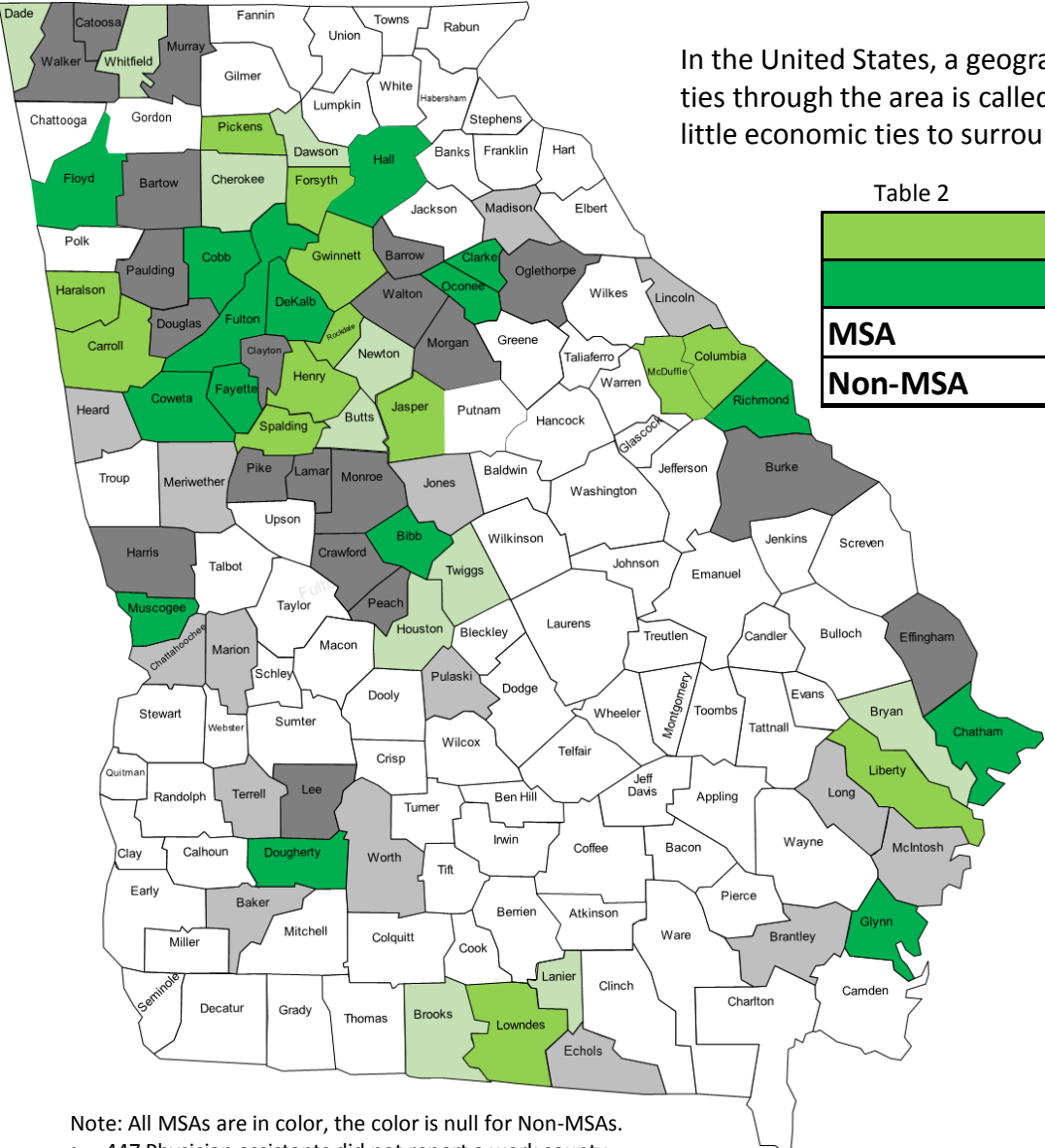
## Physician Assistants Employed by the State or County Georgia 2016 - 2017

Chart 8



# Distribution of Physician Assistants by MSA and Non-MSA, Georgia 2016 - 2017

Map 2



In the United States, a geographical area with relatively high population density at its core and close economic ties through the area is called a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). An area with low population density and little economic ties to surrounding areas is called a Non-Metropolitan Statistical Area (Non-MSA).

Table 2

Total Physician Assistants MSA and Non-MSA			
	Physician Assistants	2015 Population	Rate per 100,000
<b>MSA</b>	3,005	8,642,840	34.8
<b>Non-MSA</b>	359	1,786,539	20.1

Rate per 100,000 by MSA

0	15 Counties
1-10	20 Counties
11-1	11 Counties
20 - 30	13 Counties
30-82	15 Counties

- Based on the renewal data the state of Georgia has 3,811 actively practicing physician assistants.
- The rate for total physician assistants is 36.5 per 100,000 population.
- There are 15 counties in MSAs with no physician assistants. This represents a population of 216,674.

Note: All MSAs are in color, the color is null for Non-MSAs.

- 447 Physician assistants did not report a work county.

Table 6 - Georgia Physician Assistants by County						
Georgia	Total					
County Name	Primary Care Service Area	Physician Assistants	2015 Population	Rate per 100,000	Rank	
Georgia	-	3,811	10,429,379	36.5		-
Appling	91	2	18,521	10.8		88
Atkinson	88	1	8,342	12.0		84
Bacon	90	1	11,319	8.8		94
Baker	76	0	3,200	0.0		130
Baldwin	47	6	44,906	13.4		77
Banks	10	1	18,634	5.4		118
Barrow	27	3	79,061	3.8		124
Bartow	17	10	105,054	9.5		89
Ben Hill	87	0	16,996	0.0		130
Berrien	85	7	19,186	36.5		20
Bibb	46	88	152,862	57.6		8
Bleckley	63	1	12,830	7.8		102
Brantley	93	0	18,731	0.0		130
Brooks	81	3	15,587	19.2		57
Bryan	52	6	37,060	16.2		66
Bulloch	53	18	76,149	23.6		39
Burke	50	2	22,522	8.9		93
Butts	37	3	24,059	12.5		81
Calhoun	76	2	6,455	31.0		28
Camden	96	6	53,044	11.3		87
Candler	55	1	10,797	9.3		91
Carroll	19	26	117,812	22.1		47
Catoosa	1	3	66,550	4.5		122
Charlton	95	3	12,715	23.6		40
Chatham	52	175	290,501	60.2		5
Chattahoochee	43	0	10,343	0.0		130
Chattooga	18	2	24,770	8.1		99
Cherokee	15	37	247,573	14.9		71
Clarke	27	69	127,064	54.3		10
Clay	76	0	2,962	0.0		130
Clayton	39	21	285,153	7.4		106
Clinch	83	1	6,727	14.9		72
Cobb	21	248	755,754	32.8		26
Coffee	88	13	43,014	30.2		29
Colquitt	78	7	45,835	15.3		69
Columbia	31	32	151,579	21.1		50
Cook	80	1	17,277	5.8		113
Coweta	41	47	143,114	32.8		25
Crawford	46	1	12,295	8.1		98

Georgia Physician Assistants by County						
Georgia	Total					
County Name	Primary Care Service Area	Physician Assistants	2015 Population	Rate per 100,000	Rank	
Crisp	65	2	22,736	8.8		95
Dade	1	2	16,285	12.3		82
Dawson	11	4	24,379	16.4		65
Decatur	73	4	26,716	15.0		70
DeKalb	23	340	753,253	45.1		15
Dodge	62	4	20,730	19.3		56
Dooly	66	3	13,737	21.8		48
Dougherty	76	44	89,502	49.2		13
Douglas	20	7	143,882	4.9		121
Early	71	4	10,296	38.9		17
Echols	82	0	3,936	0.0		130
Effingham	52	5	59,982	8.3		97
Elbert	29	1	19,109	5.2		119
Emanuel	57	4	22,530	17.8		63
Evans	56	1	10,775	9.3		90
Fannin	4	2	25,322	7.9		101
Fayette	40	66	112,549	58.6		7
Floyd	18	58	97,613	59.4		6
Forsyth	13	54	227,967	23.7		38
Franklin	9	2	22,820	8.8		96
Fulton	22	798	1,041,423	76.6		3
Gilmer	3	2	30,674	6.5		110
Glascocock	32	0	3,062	0.0		130
Glynn	93	41	85,282	48.1		14
Gordon	16	17	57,089	29.8		31
Grady	74	2	24,819	8.1		100
Greene	34	3	17,281	17.4		64
Gwinnett	25	180	920,260	19.6		55
Habersham	10	6	44,567	13.5		75
Hall	11	112	199,335	56.2		9
Hancock	33	1	8,561	11.7		85
Haralson	19	6	29,256	20.5		52
Harris	43	1	33,915	2.9		127
Hart	28	0	25,794	0.0		130
Heard	42	0	11,730	0.0		130
Henry	38	63	225,813	27.9		34
Houston	67	24	153,479	15.6		68
Irwin	86	0	9,410	0.0		130
Jackson	27	14	67,519	20.7		51
Jasper	36	4	13,964	28.6		32



Table 6 cont'd. - Georgia Physician Assistants by County					
Georgia County Name	Primary Care Service Area	Total			
		Physician Assistants	2015 Population	Rate per 100,000	Rank
Jeff Davis	89	0	15,025	0.0	130
Jefferson	49	6	15,648	38.3	19
Jenkins	54	2	8,767	22.8	44
Johnson	48	2	9,788	20.4	53
Jones	46	0	28,470	0.0	130
Lamar	44	1	18,599	5.4	117
Lanier	84	2	10,425	19.2	58
Laurens	60	15	47,330	31.7	27
Lee	76	2	29,470	6.8	108
Liberty	52	17	61,386	27.7	35
Lincoln	31	0	7,880	0.0	130
Long	92	0	19,014	0.0	130
Lowndes	82	33	115,489	28.6	33
Lumpkin	12	7	32,873	21.3	49
Macon	66	1	13,314	7.5	104
Madison	27	0	29,302	0.0	130
Marion	43	0	8,450	0.0	130
McDuffie	32	5	21,498	23.3	41
Mcintosh	93	0	14,106	0.0	130
Meriwether	42	0	21,049	0.0	130
Miller	72	2	5,838	34.3	22
Mitchell	76	2	22,292	9.0	92
Monroe	45	2	27,113	7.4	105
Montgomery	58	2	9,031	22.1	46
Morgan	27	1	18,412	5.4	116
Murray	2	1	39,782	2.5	128
Muscogee	43	87	194,058	44.8	16
Newton	36	14	108,078	13.0	78
Oconee	27	13	38,028	34.2	23
Oglethorpe	27	1	14,877	6.7	109
Paulding	21	9	159,445	5.6	114
Peach	46	1	27,099	3.7	125
Pickens	14	7	31,588	22.2	45
Pierce	94	1	19,307	5.2	120
Pike	37	1	18,217	5.5	115
Polk	18	1	42,085	2.4	129
Pulaski	64	0	11,201	0.0	130
Putnam	35	3	21,730	13.8	74
Quitman	70	0	2,358	0.0	130
Rabun	7	1	16,602	6.0	111

Georgia Physician Assistants by County					
Georgia County Name	Primary Care Service Area	Total			
		Physician Assistants	2015 Population	Rate per 100,000	Rank
Randolph	70	1	7,075	14.1	73
Richmond	31	160	201,800	79.3	2
Rockdale	24	18	90,312	19.9	54
Schley	68	1	5,213	19.2	59
Screven	51	1	13,953	7.2	107
Seminole	72	0	8,292	0.0	130
Spalding	37	15	65,380	22.9	43
Stephens	8	1	25,890	3.9	123
Stewart	69	2	5,985	33.4	24
Sumter	68	4	29,847	13.4	76
Talbot	43	1	6,249	16.0	67
Taliaferro	30	0	1,628	0.0	130
Tattnall	56	7	25,334	27.6	36
Taylor	46	0	8,142	0.0	130
Telfair	61	4	15,989	25.0	37
Terrell	76	0	8,729	0.0	130
Thomas	75	34	44,779	75.9	4
Tift	79	34	40,598	83.7	1
Toombs	58	14	26,999	51.9	12
Towns	6	4	11,506	34.8	21
Treutlen	60	0	6,740	0.0	130
Troup	42	13	69,786	18.6	62
Turner	79	1	7,961	12.6	80
Twiggs	46	1	8,174	12.2	83
Union	5	9	23,459	38.4	18
Upson	44	6	26,135	23.0	42
Walker	1	4	68,939	5.8	112
Walton	26	7	91,600	7.6	103
Ware	94	19	35,871	53.0	11
Warren	32	1	5,303	18.9	61
Washington	48	0	20,313	0.0	130
Wayne	92	9	29,817	30.2	30
Webster	69	0	2,605	0.0	130
Wheeler	59	1	7,952	12.6	79
White	11	1	29,453	3.4	126
Whitfield	2	20	104,658	19.1	60
Wilcox	64	1	8,800	11.4	86
Wilkes	30	0	9,892	0.0	130
Wilkinson	46	0	8,959	0.0	130
Worth	77	0	20,533	0.0	130



The 2017 Physician Assistant document can be viewed and downloaded on the internet at [gbpw.georgia.gov](http://gbpw.georgia.gov).

The Georgia Board for Physician Workforce welcomes comments and suggestions for future editions of this report. Please send comments to [gbpw@dch.ga.gov](mailto:gbpw@dch.ga.gov).