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Introduction

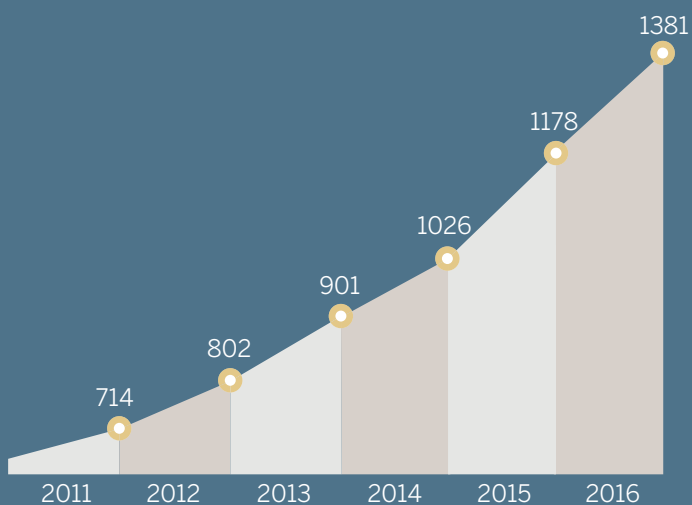
Physician assistants (PAs) are health care providers who work under the supervision of a licensed physician. They play a vital role in the health care system by performing physical examinations, making diagnoses, and prescribing treatment to patients. In addition to these general responsibilities, PAs order and interpret laboratory tests, including X-rays, as well as suturing, splinting, and casting injuries. The physician assistant role was created in the 1960s to reduce barriers to accessing health care that had resulted from the increasing shortage or maldistribution of physicians, particularly in rural and underserved communities.¹ Data on the PA workforce is critical to understanding capacity of this workforce in Indiana.

The data presented in this fact sheet were collected through an elective survey administered during the biennial PA 2016 license renewal process by the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency (IPLA). Of the 1,346 total license renewals, 806 (59.9%) met the inclusion criteria (holding an active or probationary license, actively working as a PA, and having an Indiana practice address) to be included in this report. Additional information on inclusion and exclusion criteria can be found in the Data Report: 2016 Indiana Physician Assistant Licensure Survey.²

In early 2016, IPLA provided data on the number of PA licenses granted by the State over time. Over the last five years, the workforce has nearly doubled in size adding 667 PAs to Indiana's workforce since 2011.

In regards to practice setting, physician assistants tend to work in hospitals (46.7%) or office/clinics (45.5%), similar to the practice settings of physicians. Of the PAs that work in hospitals, many (22.0%) work in emergency department settings.

Indiana Licensed Physician Assistants³



Over the last five years the PA workforce has nearly doubled in size

Physician Assistants Primary Practice Setting



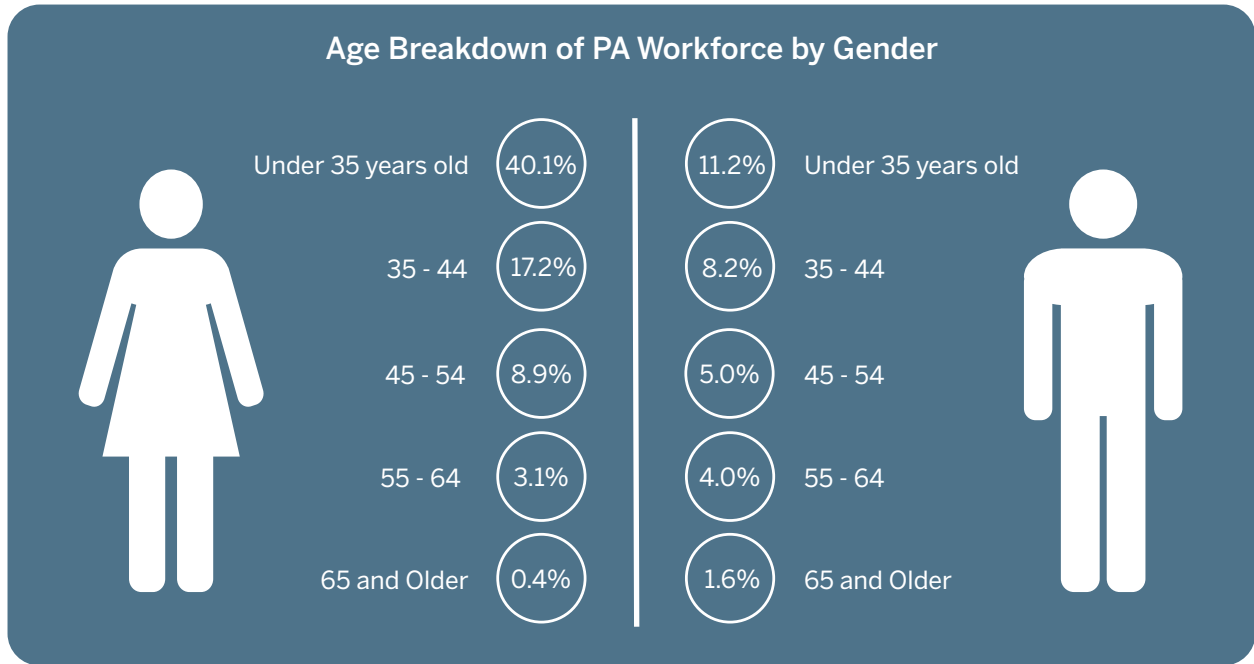
46.7%
Hospital



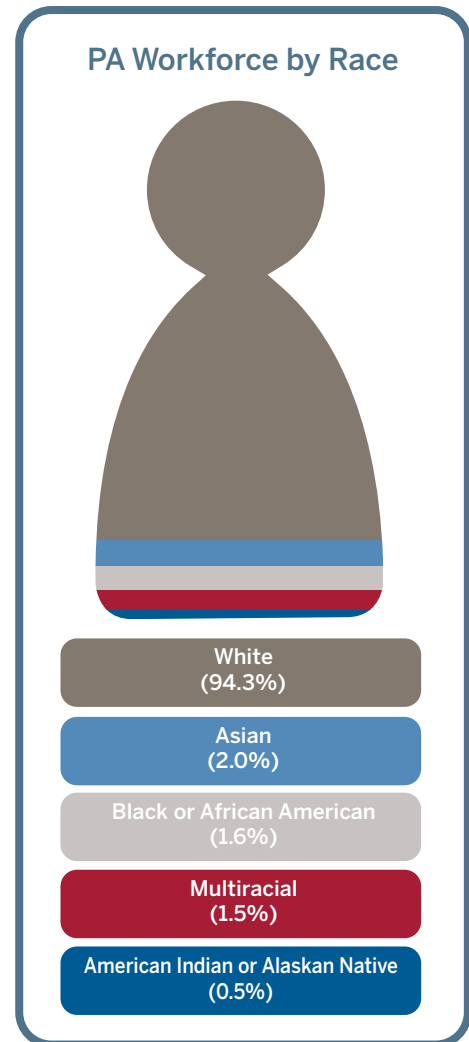
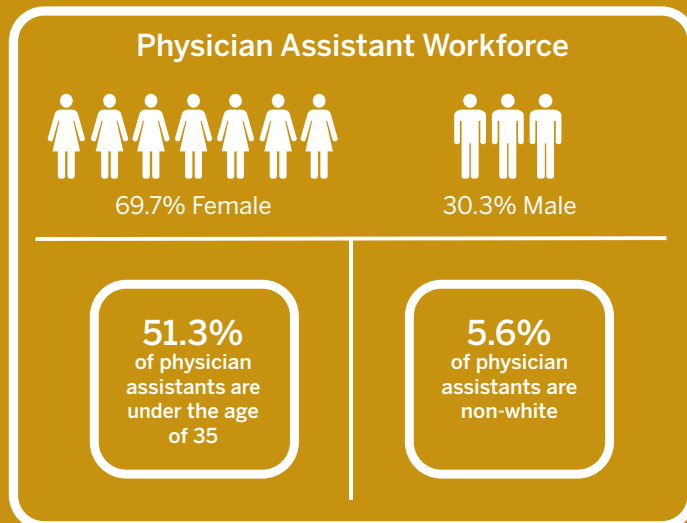
45.5%
Office/Clinic

Physician Assistant Workforce

Demographic Characteristics

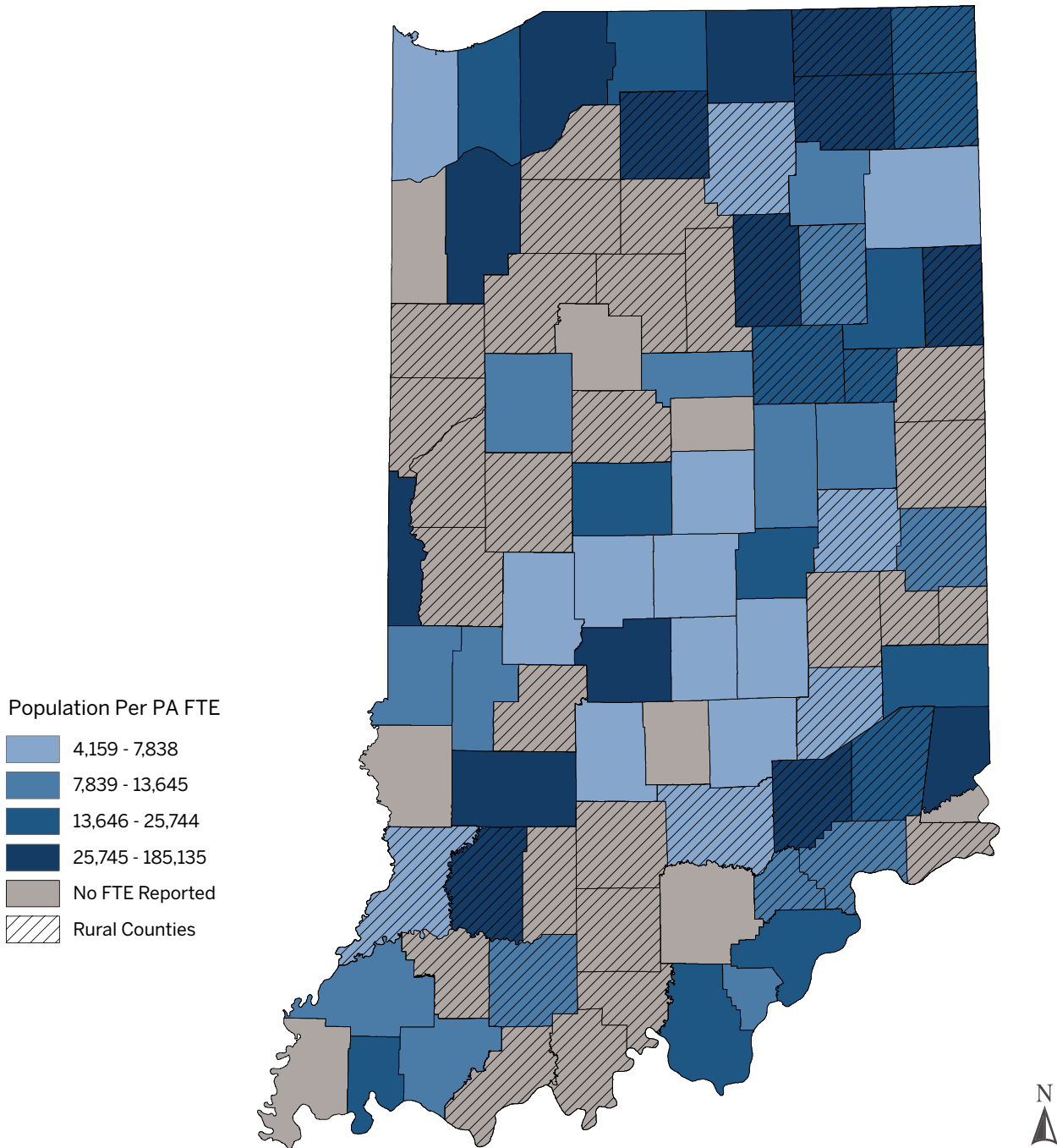


The ratio of females to males in the PA workforce is greater than 2:1, with women comprising 69.7% of the workforce. The majority of PAs identify as white (94.3%) and non-Hispanic (89.3%). More than half of the workforce is under the age of 35 (51.3%), likely reflecting the youth of the PA profession.



Physician Assistant Workforce

Geographic Distribution of Physician Assistants



Source: Indiana Physician Assistant Re-Licensure Survey, 2016

Physician assistants are practicing in 58 Indiana counties. Thirty-four (34) counties in Indiana do not have a PA reporting a primary practice in that county. Of those counties without a practicing PA, twenty-six (26) are considered rural.



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2:1

ratio of females
to males in the
PA workforce

34

of Indiana's 92 counties
do not have a PA reporting
a primary practice
in that county

94.3%

of Physician Assistants
are white

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References:

1. Boston University School of Medicine. History of the Profession. <https://www.bu.edu/paprogram/pa-profession/history-of-the-profession/>.
2. Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy. *Data Report: 2016 Indiana Physician Assistant Licensure Survey*. 2016.
3. Indiana Professional Licensing Agency, 2016