

WAMSS Response to question RE: obtaining DOH practice plan for Physician Assistants

My question to WAMSS membership: When credentialing a Physician Assistant, do you always obtain from the WA Dept of Health the PA practice plan which lists the sponsoring physician? Do you then verify that the sponsoring physician is credentialed and in good standing with your organization? I am looking to get a sense of the industry standard to make a case to our corporate office that this is a necessary step in the credentialing of Physician Assistants in WA state.

Grays Harbor Community Hospital: we do obtain and file a WA Dept of Health PA Practice Plan. We have a small medical staff, and the PA are part of our Hospitalist Program with several in the outpatient clinics. So it is very easily for us to know that the sponsoring physician is credentialed and most importantly in good standing. Any physician assistant wishing to join our medical staff must have an approved practice plan for the WA DOH.

Premera Blue Cross/LifeWise Health Plans: At Premera we require the name of the sponsoring physician and require them to be credentialed and contracted with us. We do not require a copy of the practice plan since the state must approve it prior to the PA being licensed.

Kittitas Valley Community Hospital: I have a practice plan on file for all our PA-C and if they work in different departments i.e. ER, Clinic, Hospitalist etc. I have one with each supervising physician. Supervising Physicians do have to be in good standing and credentialed in our facility.

Swedish Medical Center / First Hill: Yes we do both. We get the practice plan and make sure that supervisor it credentialed by us.

Sacred Heart Medical Center: PA's are only eligible for hospital privileges if employed and sponsored by an active staff member. We are required to have a copy of a current State approved practice plan—we accept this from the group. If a PA's particular sponsor leaves the group, it is the PA/group's responsibility to file a new practice plan with the State—I understand the State will grant a very brief time period to transfer sponsorship

Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital: A PA on our AHP staff must have a DOH approved Practice Plan for staff status. Additionally, a PA is required to a physician supervisor credentialed and on the medical staff.

The plan is obtained during the initial credentialing period and if the PA changes physician supervisors.

Evergreen Health: We obtain an copy of the practice plan that has been approved by the state from the PA. We then verify that the sponsoring physician is credentialed and in good standing with our organization.

Eastern State Hospital: We've been told by DOH that the PA can't practice till the plan is complete. All our PAs and MDs are employed so we ensure that the sponsor and co-sponsor sign and update as necessary when positions moves.

Central Hospital, Group Health Cooperative: Yes, we do. Our Credentialing Department (a separate office. . .down in Tukwila) handles the credentialing, but we have a hospital medical staff policy that details some of the guidelines. I've attached our policy which may help you when making your case!

CASCADE VALLEY HOSPITAL AND CLINIC: We do require a copy of the Practice Plan.

When the Department of Health was here conducting their last survey, they requested seeing the practice plan for the PA-C's we have on staff. I only assumed the sponsoring Physician has to be on staff here, never would have considered anything different, though I do not know if that is a requirement, but it is the way it is here.

UW Medicine: In Washington State the PA is not able to have any type of patient care until the Practice Plan has been received stamped as approved and signed. The Practice Plan is what allows them to work clinically. The State also tracks how many PAs the sponsoring physician has under them.

Sea Mar Community Health Centers: Our providers are all employed therefore we have the sponsoring physician credentialed as well.

In my former position, the sponsoring physician had to be a member of the credentialed medical staff in order to grant the hospital privileges and we also had our own forms for both the physician and PA to sign as part of the credentialing file.

TEAMHealth Northwest Division : A PA/PA-C cannot work in the state of Washington if they don't have an approved state Practice Plan with a physician who is currently licensed in Washington and is trained in the same area of practice as the PA. In other words a PA can't perform a procedure that his/her Supervising Physician is not trained to perform. It would be a good idea to make sure all your PA's have a **current** Supervising Physician who works closely with them or an alternate in the absence of the Primary Supervisor. A Physician can only have three full time PA's at any given time unless there are extenuating circumstances. Then the Physician must request on the practice Plan to have more than three PA's. Usually they can have more than three if the PA's work part time and all of them don't add up to more than three full time PA's. The request is reviewed and can be granted or disapproved depending on a number of factors. I have never had a Plan disapproved.

If the PA's work for a Group of Physicians there is a place on the Practice plan you can check and the rest of the group of Physicians automatically become secondary supervisors so you don't need to designate an alternative.

I have initiated Practice Plans for PA's and their supervisors for several years for TeamHealth. We staff Emergency rooms in hospitals in Washington. If you have any questions you can give me a call and we can chat. I don't know that you would want to keep copies of all the plans if you are an Insurance company, but you want to make darn sure that the PA's have current Practice Plans in place with an acceptable Physician or bad things could happen if there is ever a

claim. The other thing that most PA's and Physician's sometimes don't know is that if a PA is licensed as an Allopathic PA then his primary supervisor needs to be a MD. They cannot have DO's as a Primary Supervisor. If a DO' has a PA in their practice and they are the only Physician then the PA needs to apply and get an OP PA license from the WA Osteopathic board before they can get a practice Plan approved.