

MMA Policy Statement on Physician Assistants

A physician assistant is a health care professional licensed to provide patient care under the supervision of a licensed physician, and who thereby extends the physician's capacity to provide medical care.

1. There is a chronic shortage of physicians, both in Manitoba and across Canada.
2. This shortage of physicians has resulted in a lack of timely access to medical services and a corresponding decline in the health status/quality of life of countless Manitobans. The shortage has also placed additional stress on the current complement of physicians in the province, as they struggle to provide medical services.
3. For the good of both Manitobans and Manitoba physicians, it is essential that the province's physician supply be increased, both through an increase in the enrolment in our medical school and through concerted efforts to recruit and retain physicians in the province.
4. It is also essential that efforts be made to extend the capacity of Manitoba's physician workforce, in a manner that contributes to the sustainability of the physician workforce and enhances the work life of physicians.
5. The MMA is supportive of the philosophy of physician assistants, in that these professionals can expand the capacity of the physician workforce in a manner that is collaborative, rather than competitive. As such, the MMA is supportive of the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine's *Physician Assistant Education Program*.
6. It is crucial that physician assistants be integrated into physician practices, including fee-for-service practices, in a manner whereby issues of medical/legal liability will be appropriately addressed, and whereby all physicians will be appropriately compensated, taking into account such considerations as cost of practice and responsibility issues associated with physician assistants.
7. To ensure that the issues of medical/legal liability and physician compensation be given due consideration, it is imperative that the MMA have representation on the *Physician Assistant Steering Committee Working Group on Remuneration and Liability*.

Adopted by the MMA Board
May 9, 2007