



# Advanced Practice Provider Update

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Penn Orthopaedic Surgery Advanced Practice Providers (APP) have been an integral member of the Orthopaedic team for many years. They have supported the department's ability to increase access to quality healthcare for the patient's we serve.

The last year was a challenging one for all with the Covid-19 pandemic changing our lives. The work place was different for all and especially difficult for those in healthcare. We had to quickly find ways to continue to care for our patient population in ways that are safe to all. The APP's in Orthopaedic surgery played a tremendous role in continuing to provide safe access to our patients. They were the first called to scrub all clinic schedules to determine who could be seen by telehealth and who needed to be seen in person. They worked with other members of the care team to coordinate telehealth and clinic schedules. In addition to the physicians doing telehealth, the APPs also ran their own virtual schedules. This group was also the one who took all surgery cancellations and tiered the patients so that once elective surgeries started, we knew the priority of each case. They spent tireless hours ensuring that we were prepared as a team to restart elective surgeries in a safe manner. Since the time we have been able to safely open clinics again, the APPs have worked very hard to increase volumes to pre-Covid numbers. They continue to assist the department in increasing our volumes and access to care. The APP's showed flexibility, adaptability and dedication more than ever this year!

Within the department of Orthopaedic Surgery, our APP group continues to grow year by year. We currently have 38 APPs within our department. In the past year, we have added several new APP's after coming off of a hiring freeze during the pandemic. Devon Leahy joined our foot and ankle team and now serves as Dr. Humbyrd' s PA. Devon same to us a new graduate who was eager to learn and jump into the field. Nadine Raile has joined us to support Dr. Anthony in his hip preservation practice. She comes with several years of experience as an orthopedic physician assistant. Rachel Jackson has joined us to support our spine physician Dr. Casper. Rachel is a new graduate who has an orthopedic background and strong desire to be in spine. Lisa Kelly joins our Chester County team to support Dr. Sheriff in his spine practice. Lisa comes from Chester County Hospital where

she worked as a hospitalist physician assistant. Alissa Norris started with us in March to support Dr. Smith, chief of spine. Alissa is a new graduate who comes with a musculoskeletal background and strong desire to be an orthopedic surgery PA. Natalie Knitowski will soon be joining us in the next couple of months to support our new spine physician Dr. Fisher. Natalie brings to us over 15 years of experience as a spine physician assistant. We are all so excited to welcome our new APP's and to finally have a full spine APP team!

In addition to new hires, we have also had some role changes within our APP's. Kerry Howey has transitioned into the PA for Dr. Neil Sheth and consequently, Shawn Mahoney has transitioned into our float PA. Shawn is currently covering trauma clinics and training for his role. Shawn has a strong desire to run general Orthopaedic independent sessions. July 1st, 2021 Lauren McGarrity will transition to Dr. Dhanota' s physician assistant. We wish Kerry, Shawn and Lauren nothing but the best in their new roles.

With appreciation to Brian Fletcher who covered on the inpatient service at PPMC for several months while there was a gap in APP coverage. Brian then remained on service to train the two new inpatient APP's. We are very grateful to Brian who was not only able to bridge the gap in coverage but also to improve communications between inpatient and outpatient teams.

The Orthopaedic APPs continue to support department initiatives, including access to care. The vast majority of our APPs all run independent sessions which range from post-operative patients, return and new patients; as well as minor procedures. They also do the majority of the history and physicals and prepare the patients for surgery. In FY20 they saw a total of 4,486 new patients and 19,202 established patients. This number is down slightly from last fiscal year due to the pandemic. However, this is an incredible accomplishment!

In conclusion, the advanced practice providers have served as major contributors to the success of the department. As many would say, they are the backbone to our department! They are the glue that keeps our care teams together. It has been very gratifying to work with such an amazing group of advanced practice providers that make me proud day in and day out.