

Comparison of New Primary Care PA's in TTP vs. Non-TTP: Measuring Support, Mentoring, On-Boarding, Job Satisfaction, Retention and Patient Volume

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There has been a rapid expansion of PAs in Primary Care at our institution, Mass General Brigham (MGB), over the last 3 years. This included the hiring of many new graduates. The Transition to Practice Program was developed out of the necessity for mentorship and onboarding structure to meet the needs of the rapid expansion and growth of our Primary Care department. This was important to support the new PAs and Primary Care practices since we have had 19 new graduate PAs across 13 Primary Care locations in the greater Boston area.

Description of TTP:

- New grad PA is paired with a Senior PA to serve as a mentor for 2 years
- The Senior PA serves as their liaison between the Supervising MD and practice administration with onboarding and ramp-up
 - TTP PA is supported through incremental progression in schedule, including number and type of visits
 - Senior PA and TTP PA meet monthly for chart reviews and support
 - TTP PA attends required bi-monthly CME lectures and meetings

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Purpose of survey

The purpose of the survey is to evaluate the value of mentorship, on-boarding, appropriate/consistent ramp up in Primary Care. Prior to the inception of TTP, there was inconsistent onboarding and ramp up practice to practice; lack of support and mentorship; lack of community.

Methods

To measure the initial success of the TTP program, we conducted surveys for PA's enrolled in TTP from January 2018 through January 2020 and PAs onboarded prior to the inception of TTP. All 20 PAs, both non-TTP and TTP were given a 10-question survey regarding their on-boarding experience. An additional 4 question survey was sent to just the 12 PAs in TTP specific to their experience with the TTP program. Both surveys were non-blinded, sent via email with 2 reminders if not completed.

Primary Care Supervising MD's also completed surveys evaluating the merit of the onboarding, clarity of their role as Supervising MD, preparedness of PA after 1 year in TTP, value of Senior PA and ramp up of TTP PA's. 6 out of 10 surveys were completed. Surveys were non-blinded, sent via email with 1 reminder if not completed.

Practice Managers completed surveys evaluating the preparedness of PA after 1 year in TTP, ramp up and value of having a Senior PA assigned to each TTP PA. 8 out of 14 surveys were completed. Surveys were non-blinded, sent via email with 1 reminder if not completed.

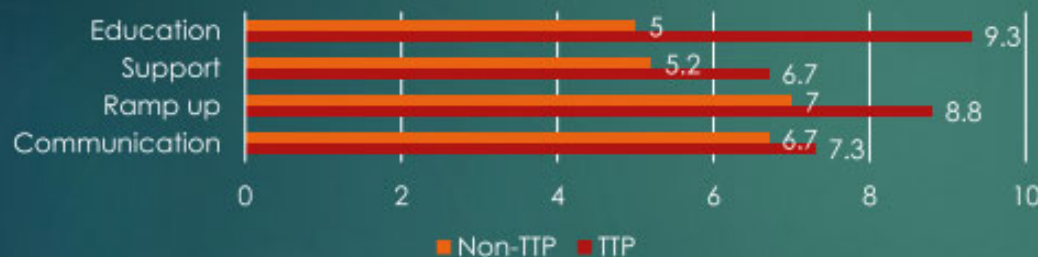
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Results

Four key areas were assessed in the survey which included communication, ramp up, support and education. Overall, the TTP PAs provided higher effectiveness scores in all categories when compared with non-TTP PAs. The Supervising MDs and Practice Managers scored TTP PAs higher in the surveys than the non-TTP group.

TTP vs. Non-TTP PA Survey-Effectiveness of Each Area

Scale from 1-10, 1=not effective, 10=very effective



Senior PA Support	78% of TTP PAs found valuable
CME Lecture Series	76% of TTP PAs found valuable

Supervising MDs			
Role/Expectations	Completely clear 83%	Mostly Clear 17%	Not Clear 0%
Ramp up for TTP PA	Too slow 33%	Good Pace 67%	Too Quick 0%
How Helpful is Senior PA to TTP PA	Very Helpful 83%	Neutral 17%	Not Helpful 0%
How prepared was TTP PA vs. non-TTP PA's	More prepared 33%	Less prepared 0%	Unsure/Never worked with new grad in past 67%

Practice Managers			
Ramp up for TTP PA	Too slow 50%	Good Pace 38%	Too Quick 13%
How Helpful is Senior PA to TTP PA	Very Helpful 86%	Neutral 14%	Not Helpful 0%
How prepared was the TTP PA vs. non-TTP PA's	More prepared 83%	Less Prepared 0%	No difference 17%

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Conclusions

- ▶ We recognize there was a small number of participants in the surveys since we only surveyed the PAs onboarded prior to March 2020 due to Covid. Our onboarding, hiring and lecture series were put on hold March 2020 through the Fall of 2020, therefore, we did not collect data during this time. Results suggest that TTP is very successful for both Primary Care PA's and practices. TTP PAs are very satisfied with the mentorship of having a Senior PA for support, a well thought out schedule progression, and educational opportunities.
- ▶ The education given to the TTP group vs the PAs onboarded prior to the program showed statistical significance at a 95% confidence interval with a z-score of 2.4. There was not statistical significance between the groups in the communication, ramp up or support. There was no significant change in our retention rate or difference in patient volume between TTP and non-TTP after one year.
- ▶ Supervising MD and Practice Managers valued the role of the Senior PA to help with mentorship and on-boarding for the TTP PA. Majority of Supervising MD's felt their role and expectations were clear. Practice Managers were more likely to think the ramp up of the TTP PA was too slow compared to Supervising MDs. Practice managers did feel the TTP PAs were more prepared after a year then the new grads PA's prior to TTP implementation. A majority of the Supervising MDs were unsure of preparedness since they had not worked with a new grad PA in the past.

References

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