

## Choose the Right Path: PA School or Medical School

**Summary:** PA school and medical school are great options for anyone interested in working in the medical profession and helping patients, so weigh the options to find the right medical career for you.



There are obvious differences and similarities when it comes to doctors and physicians assistants, but some **people have a hard time deciding** which career is the right one for them. Medical doctors are able to practice medicine on their own, whereas a PA requires the license of a M.D. to practice. This difference also affects the salary limitations for each position.

[Click Here to Browse Doctor Jobs on Hound.com](#)

[Click Here to Browse Physician's Assistant Jobs on Hound.com](#)

Being accepted into medical school often requires better grades in tougher classes, so some abandon their effort to attend medical school for PA school, but that difference is changing. More PA schools are requiring near perfect grades and test scores to be given a chance for an interview.

The lifestyles between the two schools are obviously different. Medical school is intensive and lasts several years, whereas PA school is usually just a very intense two years. The length in school affects the overall cost drastically.

Since a PA does not have a medical license to their name, there are fewer expectations like being



---

on-call or doing paperwork. This also depends on the position and location, but generally PA's are able to enjoy working with patients more instead of doing the tedious paperwork side of medicine. PA's are also able to change specialties quite easily, whereas doctors must go back to a residency program for three years if they want to change specialties.

Many have a hard time choosing PA school because they feel like they will be judged or thought of as less intelligent than doctors. However, instead of worrying about that, they should focus on helping people with their medical problems instead of worrying about what others think of your education.

- See **Explore the World of Healthcare beyond Practicing Medical Positions** for information about other healthcare opportunities.

Photo: [commonhealth.wbur.org](http://commonhealth.wbur.org)