



February 18, 2016

Mr. Denni Woodmansee, MS, PA-C  
Chair, Board of Directors  
National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants  
12000 Findley Road, Suite 100  
Johns Creek, GA 30097

Dear Denni,

On behalf of the AAPA Board, we want to thank you for your leadership at NCCPA. We also extend our appreciation to the NCCPA Board of Directors for agreeing to extend its consideration of the proposed PANRE recertification changes, so that they can hear from and take into account the voice of the elected representatives of PAs throughout the country who will gather in May at the AAPA House of Delegates meeting.

With regard to the four requests in the February 16 letter from you and Dawn, please allow us to address each item in turn.

1. **House of Delegates.** We previously extended an invitation to NCCPA to both attend and speak at the HOD meeting in our January 22 email. That invitation still stands. We will be happy to provide further details about the protocol for speaking in the HOD which is scheduled for Saturday, May 14 – Monday, May 16.
2. **Timely Publication of NCCPA Response to JAAPA Editorial.** You correctly note that AAPA does not control the editorial content or publication schedule of JAAPA. However, we did share your request with the JAAPA editor. He indicated that a commentary request from you, Denni, was already delivered to NCCPA, in an email reply to Ragan Cohn on February 1<sup>st</sup>, which also explained the Lippincott production deadlines. He also indicated that he was disappointed that the previous NCCPA board chair was unable to accommodate an interview request before the JAAPA production deadline for the March editorial. Your team's response to written questions was very much appreciated.
3. **Ensuring a Thoughtful and Respectful Dialogue.** As you and Jeff discussed, sometimes we have to agree to disagree. We believe to this point our two Boards have conducted their discussions in a very respectful manner, ensuring earnest and thoughtful debate and, yes, discourse. We believe you would agree it is important that we continue to keep the channels of communication open and be respectful of all opinions offered. As you know, we have and continue to provide NCCPA every opportunity to present its proposal and the rationale behind the proposal to our Board, to attendees at the AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit (as well as to additional PAs who could attend the session via the web), and to the AAPA House of Delegates. Our webpage on the topic also includes all of the materials that NCCPA has published to advance the proposal. While some comments made by individual PAs on Huddle may be interpreted as particularly harsh in questioning the motives of NCCPA, please remember the Huddle is a closed community of PAs who are members of AAPA, not a public forum, and AAPA does not censor the conversations. Nor has AAPA endorsed or promoted such statements made by individuals on the forum.

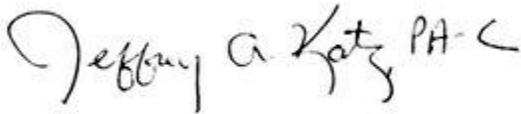
We also encourage the NCCPA to look beyond the "preferences of certified PAs" as it considers this proposal. Current PA students, retired PAs, and PAs who have chosen to practice without a "-C" bring important perspectives on this issue that deserve consideration, and we hope that you will listen and weigh those perspectives as well.

4. **Contribution of AAPA Data.** As Jeff said in his January 22, 2016, email to you and the NCCPA Board, we have not been gathering data or doing independent literature reviews to gather “opposition” research. Within the last few days, however, we were made aware of a retrospective analysis published by *JAMA* in December 2014 (<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2020370>) that might be of interest to you and the NCCPA board. It concerns a study of internists providing primary care at four VA medical centers. The study concludes that “after adjustment for practice site, panel size, years since certification, and clustering by physician, there were no differences in outcomes for patients cared for by internists with time-limited or time-unlimited certification for any performance measure.” The absence of an association between internal medicine physician recertification testing requirements and patient care performance measures reinforces our position of caution and skepticism in certification being described as an evidence based activity.

With regard to your specific request that AAPA produce data that supports our “concern about potential future impediments to PA mobility and regulation of the profession” that could result from the proposed changes, we would only say that it is difficult to do an empirical study of a change that has not yet taken place. We are, of course, aware of anecdotal evidence that the professional mobility of both physicians and NPs has suffered as a result of their specialty certification programs. We would be happy to undertake a literature review to determine whether any empirical studies have examined this issue, if that would be helpful to NCCPA.

Thank you again, Denni, for continuing to keep the dialogue between us open. We look forward to seeing you in May at the HOD meeting and AAPA conference in San Antonio.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Katz, PA-C, DFAAPA  
President and Chair, Board of Directors



L. Gail Curtis, MPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA  
Speaker of the House of Delegates and Vice  
President, Board of Directors

Cc: NCCPA Board of Directors  
AAPA Board of Directors