

Physician Associates

A perspective from the Swiss Medical Association

The Swiss Medical Association (FMH)

- The FMH (Foederatio Medicorum Helveticorum) is the professional association of doctors in Switzerland.
- Represents 42'000 MDs
- Umbrella federation of over 70 medical organizations
- Its offices provide a link between the medical profession and the public. It coordinates operational activities in line with the strategic and political goals of the association.

Swiss development and context

- Quick facts about Switzerland
 - 8,2mio inhabitants
 - 37'525 active MDs = 3.9 (FTE) per 1'000 inhabitants
 - 10'193 (internal medicine + pediatrics) vs. 22'166 (all other specialties)
 - The difference mainly accounts for residents in training
 - Graduating class of 1'029 MDs in 2018 → 1'400 in 2025
- What about PAs?
 - In Switzerland, the PA profession is largely unheard of. It's a new concept and only a handful of hospitals use them. For this reason we can say that the KSW has been a pioneer in this role.
 - Among physicians who have worked abroad, there is a grasp of NPP roles, often attributed to advanced nursing.

Hurdles and opportunities

- Future challenges in healthcare
 - Aging population
 - Chronic illnesses
 - Overall complexification of needs
- Interprofessionality
- Attractiveness of health professions
- Specific regional needs, innovation and potential for project development

Lessons learned from abroad

- Identification of the main stakeholder groups: integrating junior doctors and organized nursing to PA development scope of practice negotiation.
 - Medical societies when integrated from the beginning of PA development tend to support the profession.
 - Prioritizing junior doctors: guaranteeing the maintenance of residency training jobs and non-competition for the completion of required procedures.
 - Defined task-sharing/shifting based on competency, responsibility and an applicable legal framework allows for clarity in practice and patient care.
- Governance
 - Implication of MDs in the governing bodies of PAs
 - Implication of MDs in the educational standards assessment committees

Thank you

Further questions?

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