

Reviewer's report

Title: National trends of physician assistant workforce: 1980 to 2007 U.S. Surveys

Version: 1 **Date:** 29 June 2009

Reviewer: James Cawley

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In exploring the website of the Census Bureau and the Community Survey mentioned, I came across the following:

The latest data we can provide comes from the 2007 American Community Survey (ACS):

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTable?_bm=y&-ds_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_-CON

We are unable to provide the level of detail you are requesting. Our categories are for those in the healthcare support occupations and not specifically physician assistants.

Thus, I am concerned that there is some confusion regarding the reporting of the term "physician assistant". It is not listed on this chart of occupations.

I could not with certainty obtain the source of information that is cited by the authors and there is doubt in my mind regarding the accuracy of the occupational codes used.

- This paper would benefit for the observations and contributions of a person who is familiar with the PA research literature. A person such as Dr. Rod Hooker has expertise in the estimation of the size of the PA workforce. His email address is: Roderick.Hooker@va.gov.

I would also be happy to speak to this author and discuss the strengths and limits of using this database.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests