

## **NEW PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT LAWS**

New laws for Physician Assistants went into effect on July 1st. Highlights are as follows:

- Physician Assistants (PA) may only prescribe or dispense drugs approved by their supervising physician.
- A PA may not prescribe or dispense schedule I or II controlled substances.
- PAs can write a drug order for use in the hospital for a schedule II controlled substance, if the patient is in an inpatient hospital.
- For Schedules III, IV and V, a PA may prescribe a 1 time 30 day supply. After the 1-time 30 day supply, the additional prescription must be issued by a physician.
- The supervising physician or physician designee shall review within 72 hours after a patient encounter, 100% of the charts for the first three (3) years of employment of the physician assistant by the same employer and at least 50% thereafter. However, if the physician assistant has had less than 1800 hours of practice, the supervising physician or physician designee shall review 100% of the charts within 72 hours of the patient encounter.
- A PA may request an exceptional circumstance waiver from the Medical Licensing Board if the PA and the physician want to work in a non-contiguous county.
- A physician still cannot be the supervising physician for more than two (2) physician assistants. It is not necessary for a PA to resubmit a practice agreement if he/she needs to make changes in their prescribing practices. A copy of the agreement should just be kept on file at their practice location and made available upon request.

A copy of the changes can be found at <http://www.in.gov/pla/2592.htm>. For specific details about these changes or any PA rules and regulations, IAPA encourages all PAs to contact the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency. This agency will work to answer individual questions regarding your practice and specialty.

**Also note:** Senate Enrolled Act 363 titled Criminal Background Checks of Licensed Professionals. This Bill requires individuals obtaining licensure in certain healthcare professions to obtain a national criminal background check prior to being issued a license. Effective July 1, 2011, physician assistants seeking initial licensure will be required to submit to finger printing and a national criminal background check by the Indiana State Police (this is the background check that utilizes the criminal history record system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation). The individual applicant will be responsible for the cost of the background check in addition to any of the usual costs associated with obtaining their license (the fees will be paid separately to different agencies). The results of the background check will be shared with the Indiana Professional licensing Agency – in our case, with the Physician Assistant Committee and the Medical Licensing Board specifically – and after that, only confidentially with the appropriate government agencies and law enforcement entities listed in statute.