

Physician assistants match medical residents in ICU skills

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(HealthDay)—Physician assistants (PAs) exhibit equal performance on

clinical skills as medical residents (MRs) with six to 24 months of experience in the intensive care unit (ICU), according to a study recently published in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*.

Anneke J.A.H. van Vught, Ph.D., from the HAN University of Applied Sciences in Nijmegen, Netherlands, and colleagues examined the level of clinical skills of PAs compared with MRs with six to 24 months of work experience in the ICU. A simulated ICU comprising two scenarios on a human patient simulator with typical ICU cases was used to observe clinical skills of PAs and MRs.

Eleven PAs and 10 MRs participated in the study. The researchers found that the scores were equal for PAs and MRs in their clinical performance in the simulated ICU setting (PA: 66 ± 13 percent versus MR: 68 ± 9 percent; $P = 0.86$).

"This finding provides new evidence suggesting that PAs are safe to adjust to the ICU care team and supports a growing role for PAs in patient care management in the ICU setting," the authors write. "This has implications for medical/nursing directors, intensivists, hospitalist teams, and practice administrators in ICUs."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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