



*Accreditation Review Commission on Education  
for the Physician Assistant, Inc.*

April 25, 2024

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### NOTICE OF APPEAL PANEL DECISION

Dear Dr. Dvorak:

This letter is to advise you of the action taken by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. ("ARC-PA") based on the decision of the Independent Appeal Panel ("Panel") following the March 8, 2024 Formal Appeal hearing regarding the July 28, 2023 decision of the ARC-PA to withdraw accreditation from the PA program sponsored by Concordia University Wisconsin ("CU Wisconsin" or the "Program").

The Appeal Panel was charged with considering the Appeal Record and the information presented during the hearing and determining whether CU Wisconsin had demonstrated, by the presentation of substantial evidence, that (1) the ARC-PA findings of noncompliance with each of the cited areas of accreditation standards should be overturned, and (2) the decision to withdraw accreditation should be modified or reversed.

The Panel reviewed the facts and circumstances that triggered the ARC-PA action to withdraw accreditation in light of the documentation submitted by both parties and relevant ARC-PA policies. Based on its review, and as summarized below, the Panel upheld all 18 citations for noncompliance with the ARC-PA's *Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (the "Standards") that led to the decision to withdraw accreditation. The Panel further determined to **uphold** the decision to withdraw accreditation from the CU Wisconsin PA Program. However, the Panel has modified that decision to allow the Program to be continued on accreditation probation status through September 30, 2025 in order to permit the class of 2025 to graduate from an accredited PA program, provided that CU Wisconsin PA Program complies with the following four requirements:

1. The Program will admit no new students,
2. All members of the class of 2025 will complete all aspects of the program required for graduation no later than September 30, 2025,

**Collaborating Organizations:** American Academy of Family Physicians • American Academy of Pediatrics • American Academy of Physician Associates • American Academy of Surgical Physician Assistants • American Medical Association • Association of Physician Associates in Obstetrics and Gynecology • Physician Assistant Education Association

**Member:** Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)

**Recognized by:** Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

3. The Program will submit periodic reports to the Commission as requested by the Commission but no more frequently than twice per year; and
4. The Program will agree that its accreditation may be withdrawn prior to the graduation of the class of 2025 if the Commission concludes from the reports submitted by the Program that students are not receiving an adequate education.

### **Process of Appeal**

The Panel reviewed the Appeal Record, which included the following documents:

- All documents concerning the CU Wisconsin PA Program that were available to the ARC-PA in making its accreditation decision, including the program application, site visit report, site observations, and the program's response to the observations
- The July 28, 2023 Notice of Adverse Action Letter to CU Wisconsin PA Program
- CU Wisconsin PA Program's August 28, 2023 Notice of Appeal
- The September 29, 2023 Notice of Adverse Action letter to the CU Wisconsin PA Program following review by the Reconsideration Review Panel
- CU Wisconsin PA Program's December 26, 2023 Notice of Final Appeal documents

The Formal Appeal hearing was conducted pursuant to the procedures set forth in the ARC-PA's *Formal Appeal Before an Independent Appeals Panel*.

The CU Wisconsin PA Program must immediately notify all students and applicants that the CU Wisconsin PA Program's accreditation has been withdrawn and that the Program shall remain accredited on probation through September 30, 2025, the latest date on which the 2025 student cohort shall have completed and graduated from the program. The CU Wisconsin PA Program must post this notice prominently on the home page of the program website and provide this notice in writing to current students and in all printed and electronic media about the program. If the CU Wisconsin PA Program fails to comply, the ARC-PA will take appropriate action to ensure that students are notified of the withdrawal of accreditation from the CU Wisconsin PA Program. Any costs incurred by the ARC-PA, if the Program fails to comply, will be the responsibility of the CU Wisconsin PA Program.

The CU Wisconsin PA Program may not enroll any students into the Program, matriculate another class or offer future positions in the Program to any student. If the ARC-PA receives questions about the Program, those questions will be referred to the CU Wisconsin PA program.

Effective October 1, 2025, ARC-PA shall withdraw accreditation from the CU Wisconsin PA program, and both the Program and ARC-PA shall update their respective websites to reflect the status of the Program as a previously accredited program.

Subsequent to September 30, 2026, the CU Wisconsin PA Program may apply for accreditation for a physician assistant program in accordance with the accreditation requirements in place at the time of application. If the CU Wisconsin PA Program decides to apply for accreditation, it will be required to apply via the provisional accreditation pathway in place at the time of that application, and it will be required to meet all requirements for entry into the accreditation process that may be in place at such time.

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In addition to the ARC-PA's *Standards* that require the Program to teach out currently matriculated students, we note that the Program should follow any teach out requirements established by the institution's regional accreditor or by federal law.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sharon Luke'.

Sharon Luke, EdD, PA-C  
Executive Director

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