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Reference List for Use of Professional Teaching Associates

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I initially started a list of references when I introduced physical teaching associates (PTAs) at EVMS in 1994 in order to provide “continued proof” of their contribution and value. The list grew until recently when I had a presentation about PTAs, and found that I needed to update the reference list. I forward it to you in the hope that you may find it useful.

A side note: the name for this particular brand of teaching associate has changed over the years and there is no standard industry-wide. Paula Stillman started this whole idea and used “Paraprofessionals and Practical Instructors”. These terms have morphed into Physical Examination Teaching Associates (PETAs) for many programs, but there is yet to be a standardized name. I have used Physical Teaching Associates (PTAs) since we started here because Norfolk is the home-base for PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and it was too confusing in conversations. My personal choice to use Physical Teaching Associates was also based on the fact that PTAs do not have any “patient” responsibilities. Their function is to teach the normal asymptomatic adult physical examination techniques using their own bodies. I do not want to give students the impression that they have to treat my PTA “as a patient” in any manner (i.e. have to use patient communication techniques) but to approach them as an instructor. Again as you can see in abstracts the words “patient instructor / educator” is used. The term, PTAs is also reflective of the ASPE definitions and use of GTA and MUTA.

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- Evaluation of Physical Examination Skills; Reliability of faculty observers and patient instructors, Elliot, DL, Hickam DH *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 258(23) 3405-3408 1987.
- Using Instructor-Patients to Teach Physical Examination Skills, Anderson KK, Meyer TC, *Medical Teacher*, Vol 1 (No 5), 244-251, 1979.
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- Undergraduate musculoskeletal examination teaching by trained Patient Educators – a comparison with doctor-led teaching, Raj N, Babcock LJ, Brown GA, Deighton CM, Oreilly SC, *Rheumatology* 45;1404 – 1408, 2006.
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