Physician Assistant: A Great Career and a Great Future

ABOUT ALFRED SADLER, M.D., F.A.C.P.

Alfred Sadler first became acquainted with the physician assistant concept on a visit to Duke University in 1968. He has been involved in some aspect of the profession ever since. In 1970, while an assistant professor at the Yale University School of Medicine, he founded and directed the Physician Assistant Program. In 1972, he coauthored The Physician’s Assistant: Today and Tomorrow.

Sadler served as the first president of the Association of Physician Assistant Programs from 1972 through 1973. He played a key role in establishing the organization and worked with the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges to develop accreditation standards for physician assistant programs. He was instrumental in launching the first certifying examination for physician assistants by the National Board of Medical Examiners in 1973. He also helped found the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants in 1974.

Sadler is a graduate of Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts, in 1962 and the Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. In 1967, after completing a surgical internship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, he joined the U.S. Public Health Service at the National Institutes of Health. By 1976, his clinical interests evolved from surgery to primary care. In 1979, he was appointed the first chief of Geriatric Medicine at the Center for the Health Sciences at the UCLA School of Medicine and helped establish its geriatric medicine division. In 1981, he left academic medicine for private practice. Over the next 32 years, he practiced general internal medicine and continues part-time primary care and urgent care practice today.