

Physician Assistants at Tulane are PA-rtners in Care

Bethany Barnoski

bbarnosk@tulane.edu

October 09, 2025 4:33 PM



The four physician assistants in Tulane Neurosurgery are: (L to R) Marie Alexander, MS, MSPAS, PA-C (Head PA), Amber Bailey, MPAS, PA-C, Shelby Putfark, MMS, PA-C, and Cynthia L. Laviolette, MPAS, PA-C.

This week is National Physician Assistant (PA) week, and we're highlighting the important work Tulane PAs do to improve patient care. PAs are board-certified medical professionals with master 's-level medical education and training. They work collaboratively under the supervision of a physician, often providing more accessible care for routine issues in every specialty and medical setting.

At Tulane Neurosurgery at LCMC East Jefferson General Hospital, our PAs work in close collaboration with our neurosurgeons to deliver world-class and patient-centered care. The PA and physician collaborating partnership is meant to serve patients with more readily available care by working as a direct physician extender.

“My favorite aspect of PA/Physician collaboration is the synergy it creates in patient care,” said Shelby Putfark, MMS, PA-C. “Working alongside the physicians allows for seamless exchange of knowledge, perspectives, and skills, which ultimately benefit the patient.”

Our PAs conduct autonomous patient evaluations and develop treatment plans for both inpatient and outpatient care, assist surgeons in the operating room, and serve as an essential bridge between patients and their neurosurgical team.

“I get to care for patients during some of the most critical moments of their lives while under the instruction of some of the smartest doctors at Tulane,” said Marie Alexander, PA-C, lead Physician Assistant. “Taking care of neurosurgery patients in New Orleans and Metairie truly feels like my dream job as I get to do what I love in the best city.”

Having each of our PAs partnered with different neurosurgeons ensures every patient receives comprehensive, coordinated care.