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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 717 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY VANCE, SCARNATI, BAKER, YUDICHAK, HUTCHINSON,  
MENSCH, SCHWANK, HUGHES, BARTOLOTTA, SCAVELLO, LEACH,  
WOZNIAK, McGARRIGLE, STEFANO, McILHINNEY, FOLMER, ARGALL,  
COSTA AND TEPLITZ, APRIL 10, 2015

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REFERRED TO CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE,  
APRIL 10, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), entitled, as  
2 amended, "An act relating to the practice of professional  
3 nursing; providing for the licensing of nurses and for the  
4 revocation and suspension of such licenses, subject to  
5 appeal, and for their reinstatement; providing for the  
6 renewal of such licenses; regulating nursing in general;  
7 prescribing penalties and repealing certain laws," further  
8 providing for definitions; and providing for licensure as a  
9 certified nurse practitioner.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Section 2(1), (10), (13) and (14) of the act of  
13 May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), known as The Professional Nursing  
14 Law, amended or added June 29, 2002 (P.L.651, No.99) and  
15 December 9, 2002 (P.L.1567, No.206), are amended and the section  
16 is amended by adding paragraphs to read:

17 Section 2. Definitions.--When used in this act, the  
18 following words and phrases shall have the following meanings  
19 unless the context provides otherwise:

20 (1) The "Practice of Professional Nursing" means diagnosing

1 and treating human responses to actual or potential health  
2 problems through such services as casefinding, health teaching,  
3 health counseling, and provision of care supportive to or  
4 restorative of life and well-being, and executing medical  
5 regimens as prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist. The  
6 foregoing shall not be deemed to include acts of medical  
7 diagnosis or prescription of medical therapeutic or corrective  
8 measures, except as performed by a certified [registered] nurse  
9 practitioner acting in accordance with rules and regulations  
10 promulgated by the Board.

11 \* \* \*

12 (10) "Medical nutrition therapy" means the component of  
13 nutrition therapy that concerns determining and recommending  
14 nutrient needs based on nutritional assessment and medical  
15 problems relative to diets prescribed by a licensed physician or  
16 certified nurse practitioner, including:

- 17 (i) tube feedings;
- 18 (ii) specialized intravenous solutions;
- 19 (iii) specialized oral solutions; and
- 20 (iv) interactions of prescription drugs with food or  
21 nutrients.

22 \* \* \*

23 [(13) "Collaboration" means a process in which a certified  
24 registered nurse practitioner works with one or more physicians  
25 to deliver health care services within the scope of the  
26 certified registered nurse practitioner's expertise. The process  
27 includes all of the following:

- 28 (i) Immediate availability of a licensed physician to a  
29 certified registered nurse practitioner through direct  
30 communications or by radio, telephone or telecommunications.

1 (ii) A predetermined plan for emergency services.

2 (iii) A physician available to a certified registered nurse  
3 practitioner on a regularly scheduled basis for referrals,  
4 review of the standards of medical practice incorporating  
5 consultation and chart review, drug and other medical protocols  
6 within the practice setting, periodic updating in medical  
7 diagnosis and therapeutics and cosigning records when necessary  
8 to document accountability by both parties.

9 (14) "Drug Review Committee" means the committee established  
10 in section 8.4 whose function is to approve or disapprove, by  
11 addition or deletion, the categories of drugs that may be  
12 prescribed by certified registered nurse practitioners.]

13 \* \* \*

14 (16) "Certified nurse practitioner" or "advanced practice  
15 registered nurse-certified nurse practitioner" means a  
16 registered nurse licensed in this Commonwealth to practice  
17 independently in a particular clinical specialty area or  
18 population focus in which the registered nurse is certified.

19 (17) "Population focus" means a category of the population  
20 within which a certified nurse practitioner practices, including  
21 family/individual across the lifespan, adult-gerontology,  
22 neonatal, pediatrics, women's health/gender-related,  
23 psychiatric/mental health and any other such categories as  
24 designated by board regulations.

25 (18) "Controlled substance" means any drug designated as  
26 such under the provisions of the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233,  
27 No.64), known as the "Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and  
28 Cosmetic Act."

29 (19) "Non-proprietary drug" means a drug containing any  
30 quantity of any controlled substance or any drug which is

1 required by any applicable Federal or State law to be dispensed  
2 only by prescription.

3 (20) "Proprietary drug" means a non-prescription, non-  
4 narcotic medicine or drug which may be sold without a  
5 prescription and which is prepackaged for use by the consumer  
6 and labeled in accordance with the requirements of the statutes  
7 and regulations of the Federal Government and this Commonwealth.

8 (21) "Licensed independent practitioner" means any  
9 practitioner licensed under this act to provide care and  
10 services, without direction or supervision, within the scope of  
11 the practitioner's license.

12 Section 2. Section 2.1(1) of the act, added December 9, 2002  
13 (P.L.1567, No.206), is amended to read:

14 Section 2.1. State Board of Nursing.--\* \* \*

15 (1) Any powers and duties imposed on the State Board of  
16 Medicine or jointly imposed on the State Board of Medicine and  
17 the State Board of Nursing, with respect to certified  
18 [registered] nurse practitioners, by or pursuant to law or  
19 regulation shall, after the effective date of this subsection,  
20 be exercised solely by the State Board of Nursing. This  
21 subsection shall not apply to 49 Pa. Code §§ 21.283(4) (relating  
22 to prescribing and dispensing drugs) and 21.321 (relating to  
23 performance of tasks without direction; performance of tasks  
24 without training; other) unless the State Board of Nursing  
25 promulgates a regulation to exercise the duties imposed on the  
26 State Board of Medicine by those sections.

27 Section 3. Sections 3.1(b) and 7(b) of the act, amended or  
28 added June 29, 2002 (P.L.651, No.99), are amended to read:

29 Section 3.1. Dietitian-Nutritionist License Required.--\* \* \*

30 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require or

1 preclude third-party insurance reimbursement. Nothing herein  
2 shall preclude an insurer or other third-party payor from  
3 requiring that a licensed dietitian-nutritionist obtain a  
4 referral from a licensed physician, certified nurse  
5 practitioner, dentist or podiatrist or that a licensed  
6 dietitian-nutritionist file an evaluation and treatment plan  
7 with the insurer or third-party payor as a precondition of  
8 reimbursement.

9 Section 7. Graduates of Schools of Other States, Territories  
10 or Dominion of Canada.--\* \* \*

11 (b) The Board may issue a [certification to registered nurse  
12 practitioners who have] license as a certified nurse  
13 practitioner to a registered nurse who has completed a course of  
14 study considered by the Board to be equivalent to that required  
15 in this State at the time such course was completed or who is  
16 licensed or certified by another state, territory or possession  
17 of the United States or a foreign country as deemed equivalent  
18 to Pennsylvania's [certification] licensure requirements in  
19 accordance with the [joint] rules and regulations of the [Boards  
20 of Nursing and Medicine] board.

21 \* \* \*

22 Section 4. Section 8.1 of the act is amended by adding a  
23 subsection to read:

24 Section 8.1. Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners;  
25 Qualifications.--\* \* \*

26 (d) The authority of the board to certify a licensed  
27 registered nurse as a certified registered nurse practitioner  
28 shall expire on the effective date of section 8.8.

29 Section 5. Section 8.2 of the act, amended July 20, 2007  
30 (P.L.318, No.48), is amended to read:

1 Section 8.2. Scope of Practice for Certified [Registered]  
2 Nurse Practitioners.--(a) A certified [registered] nurse  
3 practitioner [while functioning in the expanded role as a  
4 professional nurse] shall practice within the scope of practice  
5 of the particular clinical specialty area or population focus  
6 in which the nurse is [certified] licensed by the board.  
7 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a certified nurse  
8 practitioner is entitled to all of the following:

9 (1) To practice as a licensed independent practitioner  
10 within the scope of practice of the particular clinical  
11 specialty area or population focus in which the nurse is  
12 licensed by the board.

13 (2) To be recognized as a primary care provider under  
14 managed care and other health care plans.

15 (b) A certified [registered] nurse practitioner may perform  
16 acts of medical diagnosis [in collaboration with a physician  
17 and] in accordance with regulations promulgated by the board.

18 (c) [Except as provided in subsection (c.1), a] A certified  
19 [registered] nurse practitioner may prescribe medical  
20 therapeutic or corrective measures if the nurse is acting in  
21 accordance with the provisions of section 8.3.

22 (c.1) [Except as limited by subsection (c.2), and in] In  
23 addition to existing authority, a certified [registered] nurse  
24 practitioner shall have authority to do all of the following,  
25 provided that the certified nurse practitioner is acting within  
26 the scope of [the certified registered nurse practitioner's  
27 collaborative or written agreement with a physician and] the  
28 certified [registered] nurse practitioner's [specialty]  
29 certification:

30 (1) Order home health and hospice care.

1 (2) Order durable medical equipment.

2 (3) Issue oral orders [to the extent permitted by the health  
3 care facilities' by-laws, rules, regulations or administrative  
4 policies and guidelines].

5 (4) Make physical therapy and dietitian referrals.

6 (5) Make respiratory, speech and occupational therapy  
7 referrals.

8 (6) Perform disability assessments for the program providing  
9 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

10 (7) Issue homebound schooling certifications.

11 (8) Perform and sign the initial assessment of methadone  
12 treatment evaluations[, provided that any] and order [for]  
13 methadone treatment [shall be made only by a physician].

14 (c.2) [Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

15 (1) Supersede the authority of the Department of Health and  
16 the Department of Public Welfare to regulate the types of health  
17 care professionals who are eligible for medical staff membership  
18 or clinical privileges.

19 (2) Restrict the authority of a health care facility to  
20 determine the scope of practice and supervision or other  
21 oversight requirements for health care professionals practicing  
22 within the facility.] Notwithstanding any provision of the act  
23 of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the Health Care  
24 Facilities Act, that may be to the contrary, no regulation or  
25 order of the Department of Health, the Department of Human  
26 Services or the Insurance Department shall supersede the  
27 decision of the governing body of a health care facility that  
28 the types of health care professionals who are eligible for  
29 medical staff membership or clinical privileges at the facility  
30 include certified nurse practitioners when practicing as

1 licensed independent practitioners.

2 (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or  
3 prohibit a certified [registered] nurse practitioner from  
4 engaging in those activities which normally constitute the  
5 practice of nursing as defined in section 2.

6 Section 6. Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the act, added December  
7 9, 2002 (P.L.1567, No.206), are amended to read:

8 Section 8.3. Prescriptive Authority for Certified  
9 [Registered] Nurse Practitioners.--(a) A certified [registered]  
10 nurse practitioner may prescribe medical therapeutic or  
11 corrective measures if the nurse:

12 (1) has successfully completed at least forty-five (45)  
13 hours of coursework specific to advanced pharmacology at a level  
14 above that required by a professional nursing education program;

15 (2) is [acting in collaboration with a physician as set  
16 forth in a written agreement which shall, at a minimum, identify  
17 the following:

18 (i) the area of practice in which the nurse is certified;

19 (ii) the categories of drugs from which the nurse may  
20 prescribe or dispense; and

21 (iii) the circumstances and how often the collaborating  
22 physician will personally see the patient] practicing within a  
23 clinical specialty area or population focus in which the nurse  
24 is certified; and

25 (3) is acting in accordance with regulations promulgated by  
26 the board.

27 (b) A certified [registered] nurse practitioner who  
28 satisfies the requirements of subsection (a) may independently  
29 prescribe and dispense [those categories of drugs that certified  
30 registered nurse practitioners were authorized to prescribe and



1 dispense by board regulations in effect on the effective date of  
2 this section, subject to the restrictions on certain drug  
3 categories imposed by those regulations. The board shall add to  
4 or delete from the categories of authorized drugs in accordance  
5 with the provisions of section 8.4] proprietary and non-  
6 proprietary drugs, subject to any restrictions imposed by board  
7 regulations or by Federal law.

8 Section 8.4. [Drug Review Committee.--(a) The Drug Review  
9 Committee is hereby established and shall consist of seven  
10 members as follows:

11 (1) The Secretary of Health or, at the discretion of the  
12 Secretary of Health, the Physician General as his or her  
13 designee, who shall act as chairman.

14 (2) Two certified registered nurse practitioners who are  
15 actively engaged in clinical practice, appointed to three-year  
16 terms by the Secretary of Health.

17 (3) Two licensed physicians who are actively engaged in  
18 clinical practice, appointed to three-year terms by the  
19 Secretary of Health, at least one of whom shall, at the time of  
20 appointment, be collaborating with one or more certified  
21 registered nurse practitioners in accordance with section 8.3(a)  
22 (2).

23 (4) Two licensed pharmacists who are actively engaged in the  
24 practice of pharmacy, appointed to three-year terms by the  
25 Secretary of Health.

26 (b) (1) The board shall submit to the Drug Review Committee  
27 any proposed change to the categories of drugs that certified  
28 registered nurse practitioners were authorized to prescribe  
29 pursuant to board regulations in effect on the effective date of  
30 this section. The board shall not change, by addition or

1 deletion, the categories of authorized drugs without prior  
2 approval of the Drug Review Committee.

3 (2) Within sixty (60) days of a submission by the board  
4 under paragraph (1), a majority of the Drug Review Committee  
5 shall vote to approve or disapprove the proposed change.

6 (3) If a majority of the Drug Review Committee fails to vote  
7 to approve or disapprove the proposed change within sixty (60)  
8 days of receipt of a submission by the board under paragraph  
9 (1), the Drug Review Committee shall be deemed to have approved  
10 the proposed change.] (Reserved).

11 Section 7. Section 8.7 of the act, added July 20, 2007  
12 (P.L.318, No.48), is amended to read:

13 Section 8.7. Professional Liability.--A certified  
14 [registered] nurse practitioner practicing in this Commonwealth  
15 shall maintain a level of professional liability coverage as  
16 required for a nonparticipating health care provider under the  
17 act of March 20, 2002 (P.L.154, No.13), known as the "Medical  
18 Care Availability and Reduction of Error (Mcare) Act," but shall  
19 not be eligible to participate in the Medical Care Availability  
20 and Reduction of Error (Mcare) Fund.

21 Section 8. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

22 Section 8.8. Licensure as a Certified Nurse Practitioner.--  
23 (a) A registered nurse who holds current certification by the  
24 board, pursuant to section 8.1, as a certified registered nurse  
25 practitioner in a particular clinical specialty area on the  
26 effective date of this section shall automatically be deemed to  
27 be licensed by the board as a certified nurse practitioner,  
28 either in that specialty area or in the population focus for  
29 which that registered nurse is otherwise qualified. The board  
30 shall issue appropriate written notice of such license as a

1 certified nurse practitioner, provided that the issuance of that  
2 notice shall not be a condition precedent to practice in  
3 accordance with that license.

4 (b) Except as provided in subsection (a), a person shall not  
5 qualify for an initial license as a certified nurse practitioner  
6 on or after the effective date of this section unless the person  
7 meets the following criteria:

8 (1) Holds a current license in this Commonwealth as a  
9 registered nurse.

10 (2) Is a graduate of an accredited, board-approved master's  
11 or post-master's nurse practitioner program.

12 (3) Holds current certification as a certified nurse  
13 practitioner from a board-recognized national certification  
14 program which required passing a national certifying examination  
15 in the particular clinical specialty area or population focus in  
16 which the nurse is seeking licensure by the board.

17 (c) (1) An initial license pursuant to subsection (a) as a  
18 certified nurse practitioner shall expire on the same date as  
19 the nurse's then current license as a registered nurse is  
20 scheduled to expire. Such license as a certified nurse  
21 practitioner shall thereafter be renewed biennially on the same  
22 date as the nurse's license as a registered nurse.

23 (2) An initial license pursuant to subsection (b) or section  
24 7(b) as a certified nurse practitioner shall expire on the same  
25 date as the nurse's then current license as a registered nurse  
26 is scheduled to expire. Such license as a certified nurse  
27 practitioner shall thereafter be renewed biennially on the same  
28 date as the nurse's license as a registered nurse.

29 (3) As a condition for biennial renewal by the board of a  
30 license as a certified nurse practitioner, the nurse must do all

1 of the following:

2 (i) Maintain a current license in this Commonwealth as a  
3 registered nurse.

4 (ii) Maintain current certification through a board-  
5 recognized national certification program in the particular  
6 clinical specialty area or population focus in which the nurse  
7 is licensed as a certified nurse practitioner by the board.

8 (iii) In the two years prior to renewal, complete at least  
9 thirty (30) hours of continuing education approved by the board.  
10 In the case of a certified nurse practitioner who is prescribing  
11 medical therapeutic or corrective measures pursuant to section  
12 8.3, that continuing education must include at least sixteen  
13 (16) hours in pharmacology in that two-year period.

14 (d) The board shall establish a procedure by which a license  
15 as a certified nurse practitioner may be amended prior to the  
16 biennial renewal date in order to authorize a nurse to practice  
17 in a particular clinical specialty area or population focus in  
18 which the nurse was not certified on the effective date of this  
19 section or on the date on which the nurse's current license as a  
20 certified nurse practitioner was issued or renewed. The board  
21 shall authorize a certified nurse practitioner to practice in an  
22 additional clinical specialty area or population focus only if  
23 the nurse holds current certification from a board-recognized  
24 national certification program which required the passing of a  
25 national certifying examination in the additional clinical  
26 specialty area or population focus.

27 (e) (1) The use of the terms "certified registered nurse  
28 practitioner," "registered nurse practitioner," "certified nurse  
29 practitioner" and "nurse practitioner" in any other act shall be  
30 deemed to include a person licensed as a certified nurse

1 practitioner pursuant to this section or to section 7(b).

2 (2) A registered nurse who is licensed by the board as a  
3 certified nurse practitioner in a particular clinical specialty  
4 area or population focus is entitled to use the title "advanced  
5 practice registered nurse-certified nurse practitioner" and the  
6 letters "A.P.R.N.-C.N.P." It shall be unlawful for any other  
7 person to use the title "advanced practice registered nurse-  
8 certified nurse practitioner" or the letters "A.P.R.N.-C.N.P."

9 (f) (1) A certified nurse practitioner may form a  
10 professional corporation with one or more of the following:

11 (i) Other registered nurses.

12 (ii) Other health care practitioners who treat human  
13 ailments and conditions and are licensed to provide health care  
14 services in this Commonwealth without receiving a referral or  
15 supervision from another health care practitioner.

16 (2) This subsection shall be construed to abrogate the  
17 requirement that the State Board of Medicine and the State Board  
18 of Osteopathic Medicine expressly authorize the combined  
19 practice of certified nurse practitioners with doctors of  
20 medicine or doctors of osteopathic medicine, respectively, found  
21 in section 2903(d)(1)(ii) of Title 15 of the Pennsylvania  
22 Consolidated Statutes.

23 Section 9. Within 90 days after the effective date of this  
24 act, the State Board of Nursing, the Department of Health, the  
25 Department of Human Services and other affected agencies shall  
26 initiate the promulgation of any regulations necessary because  
27 of the amendments made by this act to the act of May 22, 1951  
28 (P.L.317, No.69), known as the Professional Nursing Law,  
29 provided that the promulgation of those regulations shall not be  
30 a condition precedent to the applicability of any such

1 amendments.

2 Section 10. This act shall take effect in 60 days.