

Full Practice Authority for Nurse Practitioners Improves Equity in Healthcare - National Nurse-Led Care Consortium

Joint Informational Meeting with the House Health and Professional Licensure Committees - Pennsylvania House of Representatives on March 7, 2024

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As Executive Director of the National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC), a nonprofit public health organization working to strengthen community health through quality, compassionate, and collaborative nurse-led care, I thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the important issue of healthcare access in Pennsylvania. NNCC would like to express our deep support of full practice authority for nurse practitioners, which is before the House in the form of **HB1825**, introduced by Representative Guent, Representative Cabell, and Representative Khan.

By 2026, 21% of Pennsylvanian primary care physicians will reach retirement age. That is 23,000 physicians predicted to permanently leave the healthcare profession, leaving a gap that will impact Pennsylvanians across the state, especially the most vulnerable. One way in which Pennsylvania has met this demand has been through Nurse-Managed Health Clinics (NMHCs). NMHCs are a nurse practice arrangement, led by advanced practice nurses, that provide primary care or wellness services to underserved or vulnerable populations and are associated with another entity, whether a university, a nonprofit, or other services. NNCC has been a proud advocate for the establishment of nurse-led centers across the country as healthcare that has a dual function in workforce development and community-based care. Pennsylvania has approximately 32 NMHCs, and it is estimated that these clinics, which primarily serve the most vulnerable and underserved communities, provide 200,000 patient visits annually.

In passing **HB1825**, Pennsylvania would become the 27th state to allow nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their training and expertise while eliminating unnecessary administrative burdens. Over 80% of NPs are certified in primary care, equating to more than 14,000 nurse practitioners ready and able to provide essential primary care services to their communities. According to the findings of a [recent study](#), if Pennsylvania adopted full practice authority, the number of patients that could be seen by NPs per week would increase by 1,792 patients. By granting NPs **full practice authority**, we can both address the primary care shortage and ensure Pennsylvanians have access to quality care that meets their wellness needs.



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[Study](#) after [study](#) proves that nurse practitioners provide excellent care and achieve comparable outcomes when compared to treatment provided by a physician. All Pennsylvanians deserve access to high-quality healthcare, no matter where they live or their socio-economic status, and nurse practitioners have the unique skills and insight to meet these needs and efficiently fill the current gaps.

This solution to expand access to care is available now - at no cost to Pennsylvanians. I urge the House of Representatives to move forward on House legislation **HB1825** to improve access to health care delivered by nurse practitioners.

Respectfully,

Sarah Hexem Hubbard
Executive Director
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium

