



Comments from the Pennsylvania Public Health Association Regarding
Improving Access to Healthcare through Full Practice Authority for Nurse Practitioners
Joint Informational Meeting with the House Health Committee

Pennsylvania House of Representatives

February 29, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments to inform strategies that will improve access to healthcare. On behalf of the Pennsylvania Public Health Association, I am writing in support of **full practice authority for nurse practitioners** practicing in Pennsylvania, which is already before the House in the form of HB1825 as introduced by Representative Guent, Representative Cabell, and Representative Khan. As the Executive Director for the largest and most comprehensive public health agency in the region, I urge the House of Representatives to move forward on house legislation HB 1825 to improve access to health care delivered by nurse practitioners.

In passing HB1825, Pennsylvania would become the 27th state—including neighboring states such as New York, Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia—to allow nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their training and expertise while eliminating unnecessary administrative burdens. By granting our NPs full practice authority, we can immediately—and meaningfully—address Pennsylvania's primary care shortage, improving public health and ensuring that more patients have access to highly-effective quality care. Moreover, [study](#) after [study](#) proves that nurse practitioners provide excellent care and achieve comparable outcomes when compared to treatment provided by a physician.

Finally, patient access to high quality healthcare within a reasonable distance from home is essential. According to the findings of a [recent study](#), if Pennsylvania adopted full practice authority as Maryland has, the number of patients that could be seen by NPs per week would increase by 1,792 patients. Clearly, all Pennsylvanians deserve access to healthcare services and nurse practitioners can effectively and efficiently fill those gaps.

As you may know, legislation granting full practice authority has stalled in three prior legislative sessions despite strong support across constituents and stakeholder groups reflecting commerce, consumers, public health, education, and healthcare. This common-sense solution to expand access to care is available now at no cost. It is time to move forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kristine Gonnella'.

Kristine Gonnella
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Public Health Association