



Removing Scope of Practice Barriers for Illinois Advanced Practice Nurses

Who are Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APNs)?

- Nurses with a graduate degree, national certification with advanced knowledge and clinical skills
- There are four categories of APNs: certified nurse-midwife (CNM), clinical nurse specialist (CNS), certified nurse practitioner (CNP) or certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA)
- APNs diagnose illnesses, prescribe treatments and medications, and provide primary care services in various settings including hospitals, clinics, community health centers, nursing facilities, and schools
- The number of APNs in Illinois is steadily increasing. In 2001, there were 1,976 APNs in Illinois. As of June 2012, there are 7,639.

The Issues

- 100 counties in Illinois have an identified State Physician and/or Federal Health Professional Shortage area within them as designated by the U.S. Dept. HHS.
- Approximately 500,000 low income residents will become eligible for Medicaid in 2014. Once insured, they are more likely to seek primary care providers. APNs are well positioned to meet their needs
- Illinois ranks in the bottom quartile for overall state health, prevention and treatment, and avoidable use and costs (Commonwealth Fund State Score Card)
- Demographics are changing; the aging population, prevalence of chronic diseases, and health disparities must be addressed
- State laws are barriers for APNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training

The Facts

- APNs increase patient safety, access, and continuity of care (Institute of Medicine, *Future of Nursing Report*, 2010)
- The average cost of an NP visit is between 20 and 35 percent lower than the average cost of an office-based visit with a physician (Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS))
- Malpractice rates of NPs are no higher in states with independent NP practice when compared with those where collaboration is required for practice

The Solutions

- Eliminate the requirement for a written collaborative agreement between physicians and APNs. 16 states have already done this!
- Allow APNs to participate in the insurance exchange as primary care providers
- Give APNs full plenary authority to provide access to Illinois residents needing primary healthcare services