



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

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PAFP response to Governor Shapiro's call for CRNP Full Practice Authority

(Wyomissing, PA, February 5, 2025) – The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) appreciates the Governor's focus on access to care, particularly in rural areas, as highlighted in his 2025-26 budget address. However, we are disappointed in his support for legislation that would eliminate collaborative agreements between physicians and CRNPs.

Our position has been steadfast: Nurse practitioners are integral, valuable members of the health care team, held in the highest regard by family physicians, but they are not physicians. Nurse practitioners receive 2-4 years of graduate-level education and only 500-720 hours of clinical, hands-on patient care training versus a physician's 4 years of medical school, 3-7 years of residency/fellowship training, and upwards of 16,000 hours of clinical patient care training. Nurse practitioners are not replacements for physicians, which is why patients are best served by a physician-led, highly coordinated team.

"The PAFP firmly maintains that patients receive optimal care when treated by a physician-led team and that all Pennsylvanians deserve access to the highest-quality and safest primary health care services available" said Theresa Metanchuk, DO, President of PAFP.

Several years ago, the PAFP and other statewide physician associations reached a compromise on legislation that was agreed to by all parties, including the Pennsylvania Coalition of Nurse Practitioners. That legislation would have allowed nurse practitioners to practice independently in areas of the state where health care access is a concern, and measure the impact of nurse practitioner independent practice on access to care and patient health outcomes, while protecting patient safety. Unfortunately, the Pa Coalition of Nurse Practitioners walked away from that agreement.

"It's tempting to go for what seems like an easy solution to the problem of health care access, but we must resist simplistic solutions that overlook the intricacies of medicine," Heather Beauparlant, DO, PAFP President-elect, advises. "Patient safety should guide any discussion about improving access to care, especially for our most vulnerable patients. Ensuring that all Pennsylvanians receive high-quality, equitable care will require a collaborative approach from all aspects of our health care system."

The PAFP remains committed to its position and looks forward to working with the Administration, Senate, and House to address access to care issues in a sustainable, comprehensive, and thoughtful way that puts patient safety first.

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