

Nurse Practitioners Care for Seniors

AARP Pennsylvania:

"We support this legislation because it will increase consumer access to health care and reduce unnecessary health care costs. It would do this by removing outdated barriers that prohibit nurse practitioners from providing care to consumers for the full extent of their education and training."

Senate Bill 25: Endorsed by AARP Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Homecare Association

Pennsylvania seniors face a looming health care shortage.

- **Joint State Government Commission:** "The US Census Bureau projects a rapid increase in the elderly population as the Baby Boom generation approaches age 65; by 2020, the population age 65 and older will have grown by 50 percent, compared to a growth of 9 percent for the population under 65. This is significant because the elderly use physician services relatively more than the non-elderly do."ⁱ

Nurse practitioners are educated, trained, and nationally certified to provide exceptional care for seniors.

- **AARP Pennsylvania:** "Health care consumers and family caregivers rely on nurse practitioners for assessing and diagnosing conditions, prescribing medications, and referring to specialists. **AARP Pennsylvania supports this bill because it will improve access to care for consumers and caregivers by reducing the wait time for such care. Accessing primary care in a timely manner increases consumers' quality of life and helps to contain their health care spending.**"ⁱⁱ
- In states with licensure laws that more closely match the national standard of Full Practice Authority, NPs see more Medicare patients.ⁱⁱⁱ

Laws like SB25 make health care safer for seniors.

- Researchers compared states that have Full Practice Authority to those that don't. They found that Medicare and Medicaid patients experience **50% more unnecessary hospitalizations** in states like Pennsylvania without Full Practice Authority compared to states that have it.^{iv}

Nurse practitioners make it easier for seniors to receive health care where they live.

- **Journal of the American Geriatrics Society:** "NPs are now the largest type of provider delivering residence-based care and NPs provide care over the largest geographical service area."^v
 - "About 3,300 NPs performed over 1.1 million home and domiciliary care visits in 2013, accounting for 22% of all residential visits to Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries."
- But, according to the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society researcher: "**regulations are hindering the profession's growth in many states even as demand for in-home care climbs.**"

Nurse practitioners care for seniors at a lower cost to patients and taxpayers.

- **Nurse practitioners save Medicare on a wide range of health care compared with physicians. NP care costs 29% less for Medicare evaluation and management payments, 18% less in total office visit paid amounts, and 11% less for inpatient care.**^{vi}
- In 2016, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services proposed allowing nurse practitioners to provide some services in the place of primary care physicians in order to strengthen and expand PACE, one of its signature programs for frail older adults.^{vii}

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- ⁱ Pa. Joint State Government Commission, "The Physician Shortage in Pennsylvania," April 2015.
- ⁱⁱ AARP Pennsylvania, letter to legislators, May 2015.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Health Affairs, "States With The Least Restrictive Regulations Experienced The Largest Increase In Patients Seen By Nurse Practitioners," 2013.
- ^{iv} Nursing Outlook, "Impact of nurse practitioners on health outcomes of Medicare and Medicaid patients," July 2014.
- ^v Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, "Increasing Role of Nurse Practitioners in House Call Programs," Dec. 2016.
- ^{vi} Health Services Research Journal, "Comparing the Cost of Care Provided to Medicare Beneficiaries Assigned to Primary Care Nurse Practitioners and Physicians," Aug. 2016.
- ^{vii} Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "The Case for Removing Barriers to APRN Practice," Mar. 2017