

Nurse Practitioners Care for PA

Nurse Practitioners Care for Rural Pennsylvanians

Pennsylvania Rural Health Association:

- “Nurse practitioners are well positioned to alleviate the primary care shortage in rural communities.”
- “They are twice as likely to practice in rural areas compared to physicians, and nurse practitioners in states with Full Practice Authority are more likely to practice in rural areas than nurse practitioners in states like Pennsylvania without Full Practice Authority.”ⁱ

Nurse practitioners are more likely to serve rural communities.

- **Kaiser Family Foundation:** “Primary care NPs are significantly more likely than primary care physicians to practice in urban and rural areas, provide care in a wider range of community settings, and serve a high proportion of uninsured patients and other vulnerable populations.”ⁱⁱ
- **Journal of the American Medical Association:** From 2010 to 2016, the proportion of NPs in rural communities increased from 25.2 to 41.3 per 100,000 people while the proportion of physicians dropped from 59.5 to 47.8.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Nurse practitioners are twice as likely to practice in rural areas compared to physicians.^{iv} v
- Nurse practitioners in states with Full Practice Authority are more likely to practice in rural areas compared to nurse practitioners in states like Pennsylvania without Full Practice Authority.^{vi}

Current state law limits access to care in rural communities.

- **Federal Trade Commission:** “FTC staff have seen some evidence that the costs of collaborative practice agreements, including prices paid by ARPNs to physicians, may be especially high in markets exhibiting certain characteristics. For example, ARPNs may find it particularly difficult to form such contracts in rural or other underserved areas where collaborating physicians are in short supply.”^{vii}
- **Pennsylvania AARP:** “These barriers often delay care to consumers, especially in rural and urban underserved areas where few physicians are available to enter contractual agreements with APRNs.”^{viii}
- **PA Rural Health Association:** “Often, health care systems specifically prohibit physicians in their employ from signing collaborative agreements with nurse practitioners who are not affiliated with the system. Some rural communities have only one system serving the community, meaning nurse practitioners are effectively frozen out from being able to serve that community.”^{ix}
- Rural communities currently have roughly half the physicians per capita as non-rural areas. Urban and suburban areas have one physician for every 382 residents. Rural Pennsylvania has one primary care physician for every 663 residents.^x 2.5 million people – 22% of Pennsylvanians including areas of 55 of 67 counties – reside in designated shortage or medically underserved areas.

Other states enacted Full Practice Authority as a way to expand access to rural areas.

- Many of the **23 states that have already enacted Full Practice Authority for nurse practitioners** have significant rural areas.^{xi}
- Arizona retired the legal condition of physician involvement in NP practice in 2001. Over the following 6 years, Arizona's rural areas saw a 73% increase in NPs practice.^{xii}
- Nevada, a predominantly rural state, retired their condition of physician collaborative agreements in 2012. The Nevada Board of Nursing has reported an increase of over 20% in the number of advanced practice nurses seeking licensure in Nevada.^{xiii}

ⁱ Pennsylvania Rural Health Association, Letter to PA legislature, March 21, 2017.

ⁱⁱ Kaiser Family Foundation, "Tapping Nurse Practitioners to Meet Rising Demand for Primary Care," Jan. 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ Journal of the American Medical Association, "Primary Care Nurse Practitioners and Physicians in Low-Income and Rural Areas, 2010-2016," Jan. 2019.

^{iv} AANP 2009-2010 National Sample Survey.

^v GAO Primary Care Report, 2008. General Accounting Office Senate Testimony. Retrieved September 6, 2010, from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08472t.pdf>.

^{vi} Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho Rural Health Research Center, "Understanding Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Distribution in Urban and Rural Areas of the United States Using National Provider Identifier Data," April 2012.

^{vii} Federal Trade Commission, "*The doctor (or nurse practitioner) will see you now: Competition and the regulation of advanced practice nurses*," March 7, 2014.

^{viii} AARP PA, Letter to Pennsylvania legislators, May 7, 2014.

^{ix} Pennsylvania Rural Health Association, Letter to PA legislature, Feb. 11, 2015.

^x Pennsylvania Rural Health Association, "*Pennsylvania Rural Health Care: Status Check V*," August 2010.

^{xi} American Association of Nurse Practitioners, "State Practice Environment," 2014.

^{xii} Arizona Rural Health Office, "Arizona Rural Health Workforce Trend Analysis," April 2011

^{xiii} Nevada State Board of Nursing