



June 4, 2014

Sloan D. Gibson
Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Gibson,

On behalf of the 51 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we would like to reiterate our unwavering support for the Veterans Administration's (VA) work to modernize the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook, and urge you to advance the approval process. Collectively, the Nursing Community represents nearly one million registered nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), nurse executives, nursing students, nursing faculty, and nurse researchers. Our organizations collaborate to advance sound policy decisions that promote improvements to our nation's healthcare system.

More specifically, we commend the VHA's proposal to recognize APRNs (including nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists and clinical nurse specialists) as full practice providers when providing care in a VA facility. We believe this will further facilitate timely delivery of high-quality health care to our nation's service men and women.

APRNs are educated to provide evidence-based care to specific patient populations and are qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions. APRNs practice in a diversity of healthcare settings and are often depended upon by underserved communities as the sole advanced practice clinician. The Federal Trade Commissionⁱ, the Institute of Medicineⁱⁱ, the National Governors Associationⁱⁱⁱ and other policy bodies have noted the quality of care APRNs provide and the impact it makes on not only healthcare competition, but access to services in great demand.

The VHA's recommendation to acknowledge full practice authority for APRNs supports the profession to practice to the full extent of APRN education and training. This in turn will help ensure an adequate supply of health providers are available to care for the military and Veteran populations

Again, we applaud the VA for working to recognize APRNs as full practice providers, as this directly responds to the decades of empirical evidence that shows the care provided by APRNs is of high quality, reduces healthcare costs, and increases access. If our organizations can be of any assistance in this endeavor, please contact Convener of the Nursing Community Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nursing
American Assembly for Men in Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses' Association
American Nurses Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Veteran Affairs Nurse Anesthetists
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Nurses Society on Addictions
International Society of Psychiatric Nursing
National American Arab Nurses Association
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National Gerontological Nursing Association
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association
Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations

ⁱ Federal Trade Commission (2014, March). *Policy Perspectives: Competition and the Regulation of Advanced Practice Nurses*. Retrieved from <http://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/reports/policy-perspectives-competition-regulation-advanced-practice-nurses/140307aprnpolicypaper.pdf>

ⁱⁱ The Institute of Medicine (2011). *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. The National Academies Press. Washington, DC.

ⁱⁱⁱ National Governors Association. *The Role of Nurse Practitioners in Meeting Increasing Demand for Primary Care*. Retrieved from <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1212NursePractitionersPaper.pdf>