

An Act to Contain Health Care Costs and Improve Access to Value Based Nurse Practitioner Care as Recommended by the IOM and FTC Nurse Practitioner H2451/S1257



The Act to Contain Health Care Costs and Improve Access to Value Based Nurse Practitioner Care provides Massachusetts residents greater options for high quality health care. Introduced on 1/23/2017 by Rep. Paul Donato, Rep. Kay Khan and Sen. Marc Pacheco, this legislation aligns the Massachusetts Nurse Practice Act with national recommendations for professional licensure which will allow patients to have unrestricted access to value based NP care and will give Massachusetts the flexibility to successfully meet workforce demands, address gaps in access to care for vulnerable populations, adapt to changing healthcare delivery models and contain healthcare costs.

Currently antiquated mandates in the Massachusetts Nurse Practice Act have restricted the ability of NPs to practice to the full extent of their education and training. These mandates include the requirement of physician supervision over NP prescriptive practice, which extends beyond the professional oversight by the Board of Registration in Nursing and requires joint promulgation of NP regulations by the Board of Registration in Medicine.

In 2010, the Institute of Medicine released the *Future of Nursing Report* noting the negative impact of such practice restrictions and issued a set of recommendations which ranked the removal of these artificial barriers by state legislatures as its number one priority. In 2014, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued an opinion letter to the Massachusetts Legislature upholding the IOM's recommendations to remove NP practice barriers.

What is Full Practice Authority? "Full practice authority is the collection of state practice and licensure laws that provide the legal permission for nurse practitioners to evaluate patients, diagnose, order and interpret diagnostic tests, initiate and manage treatments-including prescribe medications-under the exclusive licensure authority of the state board of nursing."

How will support of H2451/S1257 impact patients in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

Improve access to care for patients with MassHealth and those who live in Western MA and Cape Cod. As long as NP care is dependent upon supervisory care models that dictate and limit panel size and participation in state sponsored insurance plans, NPs cannot be effectively deployed to fill gaps in access to care. Lack of timely access to primary and specialty care forces patients to rely on more costly services provided in emergency room settings and increases the cost of care paid by the Commonwealth.

Streamlines care and makes care delivery more efficient- provides patients with fill and direct access to Nurse Practitioner services at the point of care. This bill will remove delays in care that are created when dated regulations require physician involvement to initiate treatments or provide care that is within the NP's education and clinical scope of practice.

Decreases cost-The price of retrospective NP prescription reviews by physicians is estimated to cost tens of millions of dollars annually. The review of prescriptions that have already been written has *not* been shown to increase patient safety but has been shown to divert valuable MD and NP time and resources away from patient care and further drive up the cost of providing health care services in the state.

Increase involvement in innovative practice models-The regulatory requirement to enter into costly prescribing agreements with a supervising physician creates financial disincentives for nurse practitioners to participate in innovative practice models that improve healthcare outcomes and decrease healthcare costs. NP led programs for chronic disease management and home based care of the elderly are just a few examples of such models that have demonstrated significant cost savings.

<https://mcpnweb.site-ym.com/page/H2451S1257>; <https://www.aanp.org/images/documents/policy-toolbox/fullpracticeauthority.pdf>

Aligning the Massachusetts Nurse Practice Act with national recommendations for professional licensure will allow patients to have unrestricted access to value based NP care and will give Massachusetts the flexibility to successfully meet workforce demands, address gaps in access to care for vulnerable populations, adapt to changing healthcare delivery models and contain healthcare costs.

ANA Massachusetts urges your support for H2451/S1257: An Act to Contain Health Care Costs and Improve Access to Value Based Nurse Practitioner Care as Recommended by the IOM and FTC Nurse Practitioner