

**Letter: Nurse practitioners have record of success**

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Editor:

Pennsylvania faces a looming health care shortage, particularly as more patients enter their retirement years. Nurse practitioners, or NPs, have the experience and ability to help.

Nurse practitioners are registered nurses who went on to earn a master's degree or doctorate. Every NP must be nationally certified. In order to be licensed, every NP must show they know when to refer a patient to a specialist for additional care.

In the past 50 years, thousands of researchers have studied the quality of NP care. Every single study ever published shows that NPs provide high-quality care. We have served millions of patients, and more than 75 percent of NPs practice in a primary care setting.

How have NPs achieved such strong results? It's because our training emphasizes treating the whole person, especially taking the time to listen to every patient.

I was deeply disappointed by a letter in the April 2 Reading Eagle ("Nurse practitioners no match for doctors") that tried to pit NPs against physicians. NPs and physicians overlap in some ways and differ in others (for example, NPs don't perform complex surgery or manage chemotherapy). Despite those differences, NPs and physicians share a dedication to our patients.

I worked as an RN for 11 years and went on to become an NP because I wanted to make a career of helping people. I am proud of my profession and our strong record of success. I love my patients and will continue to work my hardest for them every day.

Dr. Lorraine Bock

President, PA Coalition of Nurse Practitioners