

Pennsylvanians want collaborative agreements between nurse practitioners and medical doctors

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A March 2017 statewide poll of Pennsylvania adults over the age of 18 indicates Pennsylvanians want collaborative agreements between nurse practitioners and medical doctors, suggesting current lobbying efforts in Harrisburg to eliminate them are unwarranted.

The Patient Poll, which has a 5.1 percent margin of error and is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Medical Society, found that 82.2 percent of those surveyed want Pennsylvania to maintain its requirement that nurse practitioners have a collaborative agreement with a medical doctor. Only 5.1 percent said the state should eliminate the requirement, while others were unsure.

According to Charles Cutler, MD, president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, these results are consistent with past polls.

"Collaborative agreements make sense from a patient safety perspective and support the team concept of providing medical care," says Charles Cutler MD, president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society. "The public clearly believes that individuals with graduate nursing degrees who want to practice medicine should have guaranteed medical back-up support from a medical doctor through a collaborative agreement."

Recently, Senate Bill 25 was introduced by Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-46) to allow nurse practitioners to practice medicine without a collaborative agreement with a medical doctor. Similar bills in the past have failed and have not garnered the public's overall support.

"These collaborative agreements are to ensure the best patient care by clearly defining a plan for care during an emergency or complication," says Dr. Cutler. "The public clearly doesn't want to roll the dice with their medical care."

PAMED, headquartered in Harrisburg, is the largest physician-run association primarily focused on state level health issues impacting Pennsylvania physicians and their patients. It consists of about 17,500 physicians, physicians-in-training, and medical practice administrators from across the Commonwealth.