



Benefits and Considerations Physician Assistant Legislation-S.132 and H.3399

Is this bill seeking Independent Practice? No. This legislation is about Optimal Team Practice– not independent practice. PAs are not seeking to practice independently. In fact, Optimal Team Practice includes two important points which distinguish it from independent practice:

- 1) It reinforces the PA's commitment to team practice with physicians and explicitly states the PA/physician team model continues to be relevant, applicable and patient-centered; and
- 2) It calls for a decision about the degree of supervision between the PA and the physician to be made at the practice level in accordance with the practice type and the education/experience of the PA.

Will this bill change how PAs work with physicians? No. It will not change how PAs and physicians practice together, but it will enable PAs to care for patients without unnecessary administrative burdens. PAs will continue to consult, collaborate with, and refer patients to physicians just as they do now. PAs will still be legally and ethically obligated to consult with and refer patients to physicians based on the patient's condition, the standard of care, and the PA's education/experience. Thirty-eight (38) states have the scope of practice determined at the practice level, and this legislation would allow for flexibility in the law with continued oversight from the Board of Medical Examiners.

How will this bill benefit the citizens of South Carolina? Physician Assistants provide high-quality patient care and are medical providers who bring value to patients and healthcare systems. When these new policies are incorporated into state law, access to care will be expanded, especially for underserved patients in rural areas. The bill would allow PA licensing with the Board of Medical Examiners to be expedited, and PAs would have increased ability to provide volunteer medical services and respond to disasters and emergencies. Numerous studies have shown Physician Assistants:

- Increase access to care;
- Decrease patient wait times to be seen;
- Support both excellent patient care and overall group efficiency;
- Increase face-to-face time with the patient;
- Improve patient outcomes; and
- Improve physician recruitment and retention.

Contact us anytime we can answer your questions or provide additional information:

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