

# AMERICAN ACADEMY OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Incorporated 1985

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## MEDICAID MANAGED CARE FACT SHEET

### NEEDED

Legislation that facilitates the utilization and reimbursement of nurse practitioners as primary care providers in state Medicaid programs.

### THE PROBLEM

In order to provide more cost effective Medicaid services, states have been given permission to request waivers that preempt federal regulation to develop innovative state driven Medicaid managed care programs, or to institute Primary Care Case Management Programs under guidelines established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. While there has been little difficulty with the Medicaid waivers, the institution of the Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) Programs have created barriers for nurse practitioners to practice as primary care providers (PCPs) in their state Medicaid systems. Under these systems, nurse practitioners in several states have been excluded from the provider panels of Medicaid managed care programs. As a result, patients have been denied access to nurse practitioner providers and primary care services in general. In the case of already functioning practices, this has resulted in the reassignment of patients and the dismantling of clinics that have done an excellent job providing primary care services to Medicaid patients. In other cases, patients are being denied access to primary care services because of state interpretations of Section 4702(a) (2) of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act. More recently, it has prohibited dual-eligible Medicaid patients from obtaining prescriptions written by their nurse practitioner providers. Medicaid law and regulation need to facilitate nurse practitioner provision of primary care services and the recognition of nurse practitioners as primary care providers (PCPs) in these systems, not create barriers to their practice.

### RATIONALE

Nurse practitioners have been recognized as primary care providers under the fee for services system since 1990. Despite the recognized value of nurse practitioner primary care providers, legislation continues to be needed to facilitate the proper utilization of these practitioners in many states. The presence of misleading wording in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 seriously curtails the amount and quality of health care services provided to needy and vulnerable populations. This language needs to be changed.

Nurse practitioners have been the mainstay for providing Medicaid sponsored primary care in our underserved communities, both urban and rural. They have special preparation to provide care to the indigent. Their educational programs emphasize the provision of care to patients who have limited resources, financial and other wise. They have been found to be a valuable resource to state Medicaid fee for service programs and should be recognized as primary care providers in Medicaid Managed Care Programs as well.

*The largest full service Nurse Practitioner organization representing the 135,000 Nurse Practitioners in all Specialties*