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Your June issue of *SmartMoney* includes an article titled “Health Care In a Hurry” that is authored by Angie C. Marek. Although factually correct in part, Ms. Marek incorrectly refers nine times to the providers of care in these clinics as “nurses” rather than the two times that she references nurse practitioners (NPs).

In the spirit of fair and balanced reporting, we hope that you will take this opportunity to let your readers know that the care they will receive in the majority of the retail clinics will be provided by NPs, highly qualified healthcare providers, who possess a combination of nursing and medical knowledge and the ability to recognize the needs of the patients they serve, regardless of the setting.

To clarify the qualifications, NPs are high-quality primary, acute and specialty healthcare providers, with graduate, advanced education (most have master’s degrees and many have doctorates) and advanced clinical training beyond their initial registered nurse preparation. Along with clinical services, NPs focus on health promotion, disease prevention, and health education and counseling, guiding patients to make smarter health and lifestyle choices. The example of the NP asking the author about use of the “netipot” is an example of offering non-prescriptive treatment options. The example of the NP following-up with the author two days after her visit is an example of the patient-centered care provided by NPs.

NPs bring a unique perspective to health services in that they place emphasis on both care and cure and therefore, consumers benefit greatly by knowing more about this exceptional healthcare provider.

The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) is the largest and only full-service professional organization for NPs of all specialties, representing the interests of over 125,000 practicing NPs in the country. With extensive and comprehensive research data, AANP will welcome the opportunity to work with you as a resource for a future article.

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