

Position Statement on Nurse Practitioner Prescriptive Privilege



The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners advocates that nurse practitioners have unlimited prescriptive authority (this include dispensing privileges) in their scope of practice.

Nurse practitioners are licensed independent advanced practice nurses who have completed a formal educational program beyond that of the registered nurse (AANP, 2007). Nurse practitioners have advanced education in pathophysiology, pharmacology and clinical diagnosis and treatment that prepares them to diagnose and prescribe medications and treatments in their specialty area. Nurse practitioners make independent and collaborative decisions about the health care needs of individuals, families, and groups across the life span.

Four decades of research conclude that nurse practitioners provide safe, cost-effective, high-quality health care. Prescribing medications and devices is essential to the nurse practitioner's practice. Restrictions on prescriptive authority limit the ability of nurse practitioners to provide comprehensive health care services.

Nurse practitioners are regulated by State Boards of Nursing or other State designated agencies. Nurse practitioners serve as state board of nursing members and as advisory councils for advanced practice nurses. This process promotes public safety and competent nurse practitioner practice.

The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners recommends that state boards of nursing regulate nurse practitioner practice and prescriptive authority. The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners also advocates that nurse practitioners be nationally certified and obtain annual continuing educational credits in pharmacology.

The ability of nurse practitioners to prescribe, without limitation, legend and controlled drugs, devices, adjunct health/medical services, durable medical goods, and other equipment and supplies is essential to provide cost-effective, quality health care for the diverse populations they serve across the life span.

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