



**CONTACT:** Nancy McMurrey  
Director of Communications & Member Services  
n McMurrey@aanp.org  
(512) 276-5906

Kelly Kass  
[kkass@webershandwick.com](mailto:kkass@webershandwick.com)  
(617) 520-7274

Sarah Rall  
[srall@webershandwick.com](mailto:srall@webershandwick.com)  
(617) 520-7043

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **NURSE PRACTITIONERS CAN HELP MEET THE NEEDS OF 30 MILLION NEW PATIENTS** *NPs Can Solve Existing Health Care Gap While Improving Access to Care and Reducing Costs*

AUSTIN, Texas (JUNE 8, 2010) – With an estimated 30 million new patients entering the health care system due to the new health care reform package, experts are asking an important question: “How are fewer physicians going to address the needs of so many new patients across the system?” One answer: Nurse Practitioners (NPs).

To meet the growing demands of patient care, published literature<sup>i</sup> shows that collaborative, team-based approaches – including those led by NPs – should be actively promoted to reduce overall spending on health care and provide more ready access to primary care services.

“Nurse Practitioners are not new to the health care continuum as we’ve provided primary care in the U.S. for 45 years,” said Diana “Dee” Swanson, president of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). “NPs provide an advanced level of care by taking the time to treat the whole person with a focus on both care and cure.”

According to Dr. Jeffrey Bauer, medical economist and health futurist, health care spending has finally become an unacceptable threat to the nation’s economic future. He believes that any meaningful health care reform must identify the best and least expensive way to provide a specific service.

“Cost-effectiveness analysis clearly supports reversing rules and regulations that deny reimbursement to nurse practitioners, while paying more expensive health professionals for clinical services that achieve comparable results,” said Bauer. “Nurse Practitioners are truly an underutilized resource for cost-effective health reform.”

The estimated 140,000 NPs in the U.S. have a significant impact on health care reform, legislation and policy-making. One of AANP’s central missions over the past quarter-century has been to ensure that the best interests of NPs and their patients are reflected in legislative and policy shifts brought about by new administrations.

“A critical role for our organization is to continually advocate for the active role of Nurse Practitioners as providers of high-quality, cost-effective and personalized health care,” said Jan Towers, AANP director of health policy and one of the organization’s founding members 25 years ago.

Results of a recent national survey<sup>ii</sup> conducted by KRC Research showed that while the vast majority of Americans (81%) report either being seen by a Nurse Practitioner (NP) or having a friend or family member seen by one, there are still misconceptions of the critical role NPs play in delivering quality patient care.

## ***Nurse Practitioners – page 2***

NPs provide primary, acute and specialty health care services similar to those of a physician, and are qualified to meet the majority of patients' health care needs. They promote a comprehensive approach to health care and emphasize the overall health and wellness of their patients that can include health promotion, disease prevention, health education and counseling. NPs can prescribe medications and order specific tests for patients. NPs are prepared through advanced education and clinical training, in addition to their registered nurse education and background, to provide acute and chronic health care services to individuals of all ages. Today, NPs complete graduate-level education, including either a master's degree or a doctorate degree.

The survey also revealed that NPs elicit confidence among consumers for the services they provide and when it comes to access and responsiveness, patients choose NPs over physicians.

“In more than 100 published reports on the quality of care provided by both Nurse Practitioners and physicians, not a single study found that nurse practitioners provide inferior services within overlapping scopes of licensed practice,” said Bauer.

### **About AANP**

AANP was founded in 1985 and is the oldest, largest and only full-service national professional organization for nurse practitioners of all specialties. AANP represents the interests of approximately 140,000 nurse practitioners around the country and advocates for NP issues at the local, state and national levels. AANP has continually served as a resource for NPs, their patients and other health care consumers to promote excellence in practice, education and research; to provide legislative leadership to advance health policy; to establish healthcare standards and to advocate for access to high-quality, cost-effective, comprehensive, personalized, patient-centered health care. For more information about AANP or to learn more about NPs, visit [www.aanp.org](http://www.aanp.org). To locate an NP in your community, go to [www.npfinder.com](http://www.npfinder.com).

###

---

<sup>i</sup> Bauer, J. (2010). Nurse practitioners as an underutilized resource for health reform: Evidence-based demonstrations of cost-effectiveness. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, 22, 228–231.

<sup>ii</sup> KRC Research omnibus study commissioned by AANP. Interviews were conducted by telephone between December 11 - 14, 2009 among a national random sample of 1,024 adults age 18 or older. The estimated margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points for the entire sample and is higher for subgroups.