

Our membership shares concerns about the availability and affordability of care for all Delawareans. We represent the nurse practitioners of Delaware and our members face the same challenges experienced by all healthcare providers – working to provide evidence based care to more patients in a shorter amount of time for less reimbursement.

Nurse Practitioners are certified as Advance Practice providers and have Master's degrees and some have Doctor of Practice degrees. Many have been practicing as NP for more than 10 years. There are over 1,000 Nurse Practitioners providing care in Delaware and many of these provide primary care of families, children and older adults. Many NPs in Delaware provide care for patients in the Medicare and Medicaid system, see patients in long term care, and a number have hospital privileges. NPs contribute to care being delivered in Medical Home practices, Accountable Care Organizations as well participate in MIPs/MACRA value based care models. As this is written, 80 NPs have been certified to provide independent practice with more in the pipeline. A smaller number of NPs in Delaware are prepared to provide care to patients requiring behavioral healthcare and we are working to change this.

Private and federal insurance systems recognize Nurse Practitioners as a patient's primary care provider or a provider of behavioral health but more are needed. Delaware recognizes Nurse Practitioners as telehealth providers but many are not effectively using this resource. We agree more primary care practitioners and behavioral health providers are needed in Delaware. We also recognize telehealth to expand services to patients and communities.

A cost-effective solution for Delaware is to support the preparation of more Nurse Practitioners as primary care providers, mental health providers and telehealth / telemental providers. This support would include:

- Scholarships to support NPs students who will provide primary or behavior healthcare to Delaware residents.
- Educational program funding to allow the universities in Delaware currently preparing nurse practitioners to admit more students.
- Tax credits for practices and preceptors sharing time and knowledge to prepare Nurse Practitioners as primary care and behavioral health clinicians.
- Funding for equipment and demonstration projects using nurse practitioners as primary care telehealth and telemental providers.

We need many types of clinicians working together to provide patients with seamless, coordinated, quality care that results in value and satisfaction. Nurse Practitioners working throughout the US have demonstrated they bring all of this and have done this for more than 50 years. Nurse Practitioner clinicians in Delaware are ready to bring more of the right care at the right time to Delawareans. We urge you to recognize Nurse Practitioners as a resource to help Delaware reach its goals to improve healthcare delivery and get the value our citizens need.

Nurses Practitioners are available to assist the Delaware Health Care Commission with its mission and look forward to being a partner in health and wellness for all Delawareans.

Sincerely,

Delaware Coalition of Nurse Practitioners