

Daniel G. McMurtrie, M.D., Testimony Senate Bill 481
Senate Health Policy Committee
May 31, 2012

Good afternoon, Chairman Marleau and members of the committee. My name is Daniel G. McMurtrie, and I am a physician with over 30 years experience working closely with Certified Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives, and Clinical Nurse Specialists. I enthusiastically support Senate Bill 481, which will update the Michigan Public Health Code to accurately reflect the current practice of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses.

I am an obstetrician gynecologist in private group practice for 30 years and I have been the Department Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology at St Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor for 24 years. In the past, I have served as Chief of Staff at St Joseph Mercy Hospital and Chairman of the Board of Integrated Health Associates, a large multispecialty group with 50 Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and 200 physicians.

My experience in these clinical and administrative positions has given me insight into the roles and practice patterns of a variety of health care providers. My current responsibilities include implementation and monitoring of patient safety, quality improvement, and risk management activities. In my experience, I have found Advanced Practice Registered Nurses to be responsible, thoughtful providers of care that consistently meets the highest standards. It has been clear to me throughout my career that health care must be a team effort. Collaboration is essential if we are to provide safe and effective care for patients. Only when all providers are allowed to practice to their fullest capacity based on their educational preparation and experience will we achieve the best team environment.

Regardless of the outcome of the Supreme Court deliberations about the Affordable Care Act, the practice of medicine is already undergoing extensive change. The incentives in the current fee-for-service payment system are rapidly changing to a fee-for-value system. We will be expected to care for an increasing number of Michigan citizens with significantly fewer resources. Michigan could see as many as 500,000 additional new Medicaid eligible patients along with increasing demand for evidence based preventive services. This bill will help us to expand the access for these patients and do so with less cost and improved safety.

In my leadership role, I have been involved in strategic planning for the best use of health care resources in our changing healthcare environment. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses provide cost effective care that can improve access and cost efficiency for many patients and payers. Ambiguous requirements for "supervision" unnecessarily limit the effectiveness of these professionals. In my experience, advanced practice nurses provide care within the scope of their training and experience, consult appropriately when indicated, and provide high quality care with a nursing perspective. They are not "physician extenders" but rather valuable members of the team, bringing unique and needed skills to the bedside.

Legal authority should be provided for what is already effective current practice. Unnecessary barriers that exist in Michigan include restrictions on prescribing needed pain medications and failure to legally recognize the fact that Advanced Practice Registered Nurses currently prescribe medications safely and effectively in an independent manner.

I urge you to define such authority and update the Public Health Code by supporting Senate Bill 481.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel G. McMurtrie

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