

The Mississippi Association of Nurse Practitioners Supports the “Patient Access to Care Act”

THE NEED



- › The State of Mississippi, like other states, struggles with an aging population, increased prevalence of chronic disease, rising healthcare costs, access to care challenges, and areas with shortages of primary care professionals.
- › Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), including Nurse Practitioners, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, and Nurse Midwives, are highly trained and educated healthcare professionals.
- › Patient safety, quality care and access to healthcare are of the utmost importance to all APRNs.
- › APRNs provide quality healthcare in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, universities, hospice facilities, clinics, mental health facilities, operating rooms, and for federal and state agencies. There are approximately 3,700 APRNs licensed in Mississippi.
- › Scientific research documents the safety and quality of care provided by APRNs.
- › Current statutory language has been used as a justification to restrict access to care for Mississippians, through promulgation of rules and regulations by unelected officials that place artificial constraints on APRNs and physicians.

THE REMEDY

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- › By adopting the “Patient Access to Care Act,” to eliminate the requirement for a formal collaborating contract between APRNs and physicians, Mississippi will join 21 other states and the District of Columbia that have passed similar legislation. Amending current law will NOT eliminate collaboration among APRNs and physicians. APRNs will continue to collaborate with healthcare providers, including physicians, in the best interest of patients, as they do every day.
- › States that have passed similar legislation have proven results - increased access to care, improved patient outcomes, and lower healthcare costs.
- › This legislation is supported by the Mississippi Nurses’ Association, the Mississippi Association of Nurse Practitioners, the Mississippi Association of Nurse Anesthetists, and the Mississippi Board of Nursing.

THE EFFECT



- › Removing artificial barriers for APRNs means a larger primary care workforce, improved patient access, and lower healthcare costs. Studies have shown that utilizing specialty trained healthcare professionals, such as APRNs, increases access to care and enhances quality of care.
- › APRNs provide high-quality healthcare services that focus on the whole patient. Removing unnecessary regulatory burdens that have nothing to do with patient safety, or quality of and access to healthcare, makes sense for the patients and the State of Mississippi. Healthcare should be accessible to all Mississippians regardless of race, region, or socioeconomic status.