

WHEREAS, nurses and nurse practitioners (NPs) as trusted frontline health care providers for patients in our state; and

WHEREAS, nurses are the largest healthcare workforce and experts in providing healthcare in all settings from the bedside to the community, and are committed to protecting the patients they care for; and

WHEREAS, APRNs are highly skilled practitioners with advanced education and clinical training building upon their initial registered nurse preparation; and

WHEREAS, nearly 40,000 registered nurses and 14,000 licensed practical nurses provide skilled healthcare in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other settings in Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, over 3000 certified NPs in Arkansas treat acute and chronic health conditions and focus on health promotion, disease prevention and health education and counseling, guiding patients to make smarter health and lifestyle choices; and

WHEREAS, in the tradition of Florence Nightingale, nurses are natural problem-solvers and innovators; and

WHEREAS, nurses are the largest group of healthcare professionals and committed to protecting the patients they care for;

The nurses of Arkansas offer their full support to the people of Arkansas in this time of crisis.

TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ARKANSANS, WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT:

All nurses be authorized to practice at the level of their education and certification: We request that regulations that provide unnecessary barriers to practice, including the mandatory collaborative practice agreement for APRN prescribing. Neighboring states, including Tennessee and Louisiana have removed restricted regulations in the time of crisis.

Arkansas enable any willing provider to provide access to care for Medicaid enrollees: NPs are authorized to be primary care providers in 43 states and DC. Access to all providers is necessary to meet the needs of the 1.2 million Arkansas Medicaid enrollees.

Clinicians be authorized to order controlled substances through telehealth visits: Many patients who are managed for chronic pain in specialty and primary care clinics are at higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Providing a mechanism for patients who are already managed safely with medication therapy for chronic pain to receive a refill of their medications without a face-to-face clinic visit will decrease their risk.

Emergency healthcare workforce declarations authorize Arkansas to recognize out-of-state healthcare licenses and enable retired or inactive clinicians in good standing to resume work within their scope of practice: This will bolster the healthcare workforce of Arkansas and allow qualified clinicians to meet the needs of their communities.

Respectfully submitted,



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