

Improving Access to Health Care in Michigan through

Full Practice Authority for Nurse Practitioners:

Legislative Task Force White Paper

Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners

Authors:

Grace A. Jacek, DNP, R.N., FNP-BC

Barbara C. Jaquith, DNP, APRN, PNP-BC, FNP-BC

Ann P. Sheehan, DNP, PNP-C

Denise Soltow Hershey, PhD, FNP – BC,

Correspondence concerning this paper should sent to Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners,
2501 Jolly Rd, Ste. 110, Okemos, MI 48864. Email: director@micnp.org **Executive Summary**

Michigan is facing a healthcare provider shortage. It is estimated that by 2025 Michigan will need approximately 1000 primary care providers (United States Health Resources and Services Administration [HRSA], 2016). This is compounded by the fact that many residents of Michigan do not have reasonable geographic access to a regular healthcare provider. Michigan nurse practitioners (NPs) are committed to the health and well-being of the residents of the state of Michigan. Patients cared for by NPs have fewer unnecessary emergency department visits, reduced hospital admissions and readmissions within 30 days, receive regular preventive health screening, and are more compliant with recommended treatments.

NPs are licensed professional practitioners, educated at the master's or doctoral levels, and "practice at the highest level of professional nursing practice" (American Association of Nurse Practitioners [AANP], 2015). Several decades of data demonstrate that NPs with full practice authority (FPA) increase access to safe, high-quality, cost-effective care; while facilitating flexible, innovative healthcare business models (Dill, et al., 2013; Leach et al., 2018). FPA is the legal permission of a professional to be able to practice to the full extent of their education, training, and certification. Twenty-three states have FPA for NP's to facilitate access to health care. Michigan is considered one of the 12 most restrictive states for NP practice, requiring NP's to practice under supervision of a physician. Access to care is hindered in Michigan, by unnecessary, restrictive legal statutes that do not recognize NP's education, training and certification. This limits NP's ability to work in the communities where physicians are not working.

Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners (MICNP) recommends that lifting restrictions on NP scope of practice is a prudent decision to facilitate access to care. NPs improve access to health care by increasing the health care workforce capacity of fully qualified professional providers who are available to care for patients in diverse care settings. MICNP calls for Michigan legislators to modernize statutes to adopt and authorize FPA inclusive of full prescriptive authority for NPs in all healthcare settings, permanently. This will make NP practice in Michigan current with evolving national standards of care and improve Michigan residents' access to affordable health care. This reflects Governor Whitmer's

health care priorities which focus on: making health care more affordable; expanding access to health care; improving health care quality; and investing in public health.