

# **Nurse Practitioners: Improving Access to High Quality, Cost Effective Care in Michigan**

**OUR OBJECTIVE:** To ensure that all Michigan residents have access to high quality, affordable healthcare.

**OUR SOLUTION:** Full scope of practice for nurse practitioners (NPs) in Michigan prioritizes patient care needs, helping to relieve the shortage of health care providers and benefitting all Michigan residents.

**FACT:** Michigan has a shortage of physicians.

- Michigan's severe shortage of physicians is expected to worsen due to physician retirement. By 2025, it is projected that Michigan will have a shortage of approximately 1,000 primary care physicians<sup>1</sup>.
- Michigan's aging population requires primary and specialty care to manage their chronic illnesses. Individuals who are uninsured and underinsured (Medicaid and Medicare) have increased difficulties in accessing specialty and mental health care<sup>2</sup>.
- Primary care and specialist physician shortages are severe in the majority of rural and urban areas in the state, requiring residents to travel farther than the next county to receive appropriate care<sup>3,5</sup>
- Underserved rural regions are associated with higher chronic disease burden and higher cost of care<sup>7,9,10</sup>

**FACT:** Michigan is one of the most restrictive states for NP practice.

- Michigan is one of 11 states with the most restrictive scope of practice regulations, limiting nurse practitioner's ability to work at their full scope of education, training and experience.<sup>8</sup>
- Restrictive scope of practice regulations limit nurse practitioner's ability to practice in underserved rural and urban areas due to physician supervision requirements.



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**FACT:** Nurse Practitioners will help fill the gap.

- Nurse practitioners are highly educated clinicians who traditionally practice in underserved rural and urban areas delivering high quality, cost-effective care equal to or better than physician-delivered care<sup>6,8</sup>.
- Research shows that in states with full scope of practice, more nurse practitioners practice in health professional shortage areas<sup>10</sup>.
- Full scope of practice for nurse practitioners in Michigan would ensure the most vulnerable Michiganders (older adults and children living in poverty) have greater access to healthcare<sup>5,7,11</sup>
- Mortality rates for cancer, heart disease and stroke patients have been found to be lower in those parts of the U.S. that have increased access to primary to care.
- In critical care settings, research has shown that NPs reduce length of stay, time to consultation and treatment, mortality, improved patient satisfaction and cost savings.<sup>1315</sup>

**FACT:** Significant support exists for full practice authority.

- The Michigan Task Force on Nursing<sup>13</sup> recommended that the State remove barriers to nurse practitioner practice that put Michigan at a disadvantage in cultivating an adequate nurse practitioner workforce.
- The Institute of Medicine<sup>14</sup> recommended that nurse practitioners be utilized to their full potential based on their education and experience.
- Johnson & Johnson advocates for the use of nurse practitioners to fill the need for specialized, knowledgeable clinicians<sup>4</sup>.
- Several other national leaders and national organizations such as the National Academy of Medicine and AARP support full practice authority for nurse practitioners.



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