



**APRN MODERNIZATION ACT**  
*Education Accreditation  
Certification Licensure*

**Information for School of Nursing Leaders on the APRN Modernization Act**

As the leader for your nursing educational program, we would like to inform you of a pending legislative proposal that address the practice of Advanced Practice Nurses in Wisconsin. The goal of the legislation is to provide greater clarity regarding the role of advanced practice nurses which we believe will support increased transparency and understanding of the care provided to our patients. The information below provides greater detail on the proposed legislation.

**Goal of Legislation:** Wisconsin's Nurse Practice Act, State Statute 441,<sup>1</sup> is relatively silent when it comes to defining the role and responsibility of all advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). Legislation recognized advanced practice registered nurses in 1995 when subsets of these practitioners were granted prescriptive authority. Wisconsin State Statute 441.16<sup>2</sup> was created to allow advanced practice nurses to prescribe medications under the conditions defined. However, APRNs practice beyond the realm of prescriber work. Clarity regarding their legal definition and role are needed.

**Who are Advanced Practice Registered Nurses:** APRNs are registered nurses who have acquired, through graduate-level education, advanced clinical knowledge and skills to provide direct patient care.

There are four distinct types or roles for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

- Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)
- Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)
- Nurse Practitioner (NP)

**Recommendation:** This proposed legislation will:

- Amend Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 441 to achieve uniformity with the National Consensus Model for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses<sup>3</sup> that includes the following:
- Provide licensure for advanced practice registered nurses (APRN)
- The APRN license will recognize the four practice roles
  - Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)
  - Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)
  - Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)
  - Nurse Practitioner (NP)
- Define Advanced Practice Registered Nursing
- Provide technical amendments to address state statutes that currently use Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber (APNP)

**Facts About Wisconsin's Advanced Registered Practice Nurses (APRNs):**

- APRNs are registered nurses who have acquired, through graduate-level education, advanced clinical knowledge and skills to provide direct patient care for specific populations of patients, including adults, families, children and newborns and pregnant women. They are educationally prepared to assess, diagnose, manage patient problems and perform procedures.
- APRNs provide services in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, long term care, schools of nursing, private offices, and schools. Significantly, they practice in places where there is an increased demand for providers to meet the health needs of the communities they serve including psychiatric/mental health.

- APRNs contribute to the educational preparation of undergraduate and graduate level nursing students. According to 2016 Wisconsin RN Survey, six percent or 241 APRNs indicated that they were nurse educators in the academic setting.
- Health care systems can attest to the benefits of utilizing APRNs in acute, primary, long-term care, occupational and other community settings. With primary care focusing on patient-centered care coordination that delivers cost-effective, appropriate care at the appropriate level, Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists provide care focusing on prevention and health promotion services, particularly for patients with chronic diseases. Outcomes with these patients are found to be excellent, consistent with care delivered by physicians.<sup>4</sup>
- Comprehensive women's health care across the life-span including obstetrics is increasingly the preferred method of health care delivery which is provided by Certified Nurse Midwives.
- The outcomes of care delivered by APRNs results in high patient satisfaction scores, reflected in improved access to providers and transparency to the public, amid continued perception of nurses as "a most-trusted profession." Provider satisfaction scores may likewise increase.<sup>5</sup>
- The Department of Workforce Development reported that in 2016 there were 4,360 APRNs in Wisconsin, who are evenly distributed throughout the state. However, this is only 6.9% of the RN workforce, which is below the APRN national average of 11%.<sup>6</sup>
- CNMs are the only APRNs that are licensed in Wisconsin. Legislation is needed to recognize all APRNs through licensure.
- There are approximately 3,000 APRNs that have statutory authority to prescribe. The remaining APRNs (1,360) are omitted in statute. Given their roles and contributions to healthcare organizations it is important that all APRNs be identified in state statute.

**Demand for APNs is growing because:**

- Hospitals throughout Wisconsin face serious provider shortages that include APRNs. The Wisconsin Hospital Association 2016 workforce publication reported vacancy rates of 11.2% for Nurse Practitioners (NP); 7.8% for Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS); and 4% for certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA).<sup>7</sup>
- Increased use of surgical centers in urban and rural settings is dependent on the services of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists and other on-site Advanced Practice Registered Nurses.
- Employers will have increased choices of providers for positions, since this legislation will improve clarity of title/credentials/skills to address present needs, as well as for future projections. For example: The growth in Medicare eligible individuals in Wisconsin is projected to increase from 13% (726,280) in 2005 to 22.3% (1,485,570) in 2035. For Medicaid eligible it is anticipated that the numbers will increase slightly but the cost of care, which will require more intense services, will increase 5.9 percent per year 2020 -2025.<sup>8</sup> This will require greater numbers of APRNs to provide interprofessional, coordinated, value-based care, in order to achieve quality health care outcomes and cost efficiencies.
- The number of businesses offering on-site primary care and occupational health services as benefits to employees will continue to increase. As providers in these settings, APRNs deliver relevant, timely access to cost-effective and high-quality care.

<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 441, Board of Nursing. <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/441>

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 441.16, Prescription Privileges of Nurses. <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/441/1/16>

<sup>3</sup> National Consensus Model for APRN Regulation. National Council of State Boards of Nursing. <https://www.ncsbn.org/421.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Quality of primary care by advanced practice nurses: a systematic review. Int J Qual Health Care (2015) 27 (5): 396-404. <https://academic.oup.com/intqhc/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/intqhc/mzv054>

<sup>5</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Quality of Care Provided by Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). <https://www.ncsbn.org/APRNReadingList042616.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Wisconsin 2016 RN Workforce Survey. Labor Market Information, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2016. [http://www.wisconsincenterfornursing.org/documents/index\\_docs/2016\\_WI\\_RNSurvey\\_At%20a%20Glance%20Summary%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.wisconsincenterfornursing.org/documents/index_docs/2016_WI_RNSurvey_At%20a%20Glance%20Summary%20FINAL.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Wisconsin Health Care Workforce 2016 Report. Wisconsin Hospital Association. <http://www.wha.org/Data/Sites/1/pdf/2016WorkforceReport.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> National Health Expenditure Projections 2016-2025, Forecast Summary. Office of the Actuary in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/NationalHealthExpendData/NationalHealthAccountsProjected.html>