



June 30, 2014

Sloan D. Gibson
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Gibson,

The Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland (NPAM) whole heartedly supports the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) proposal to recognize advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), including nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists, and clinical nurse specialists, as full practice providers in the VHA Nursing Handbook. As the largest professional association in Maryland representing nurse practitioners, we are well-acquainted with the high quality, cost effective work of nurse practitioners (NPs) and other advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). Additionally, the complex and chronic care needs of the veteran population demand the multifaceted skills of APRNs, who can provide chronic disease management and patient education as well as astute diagnosis and treatment decision making skills. Today's veterans and their families should have access to a full range of healthcare providers and their expertise.

As you know, APRNs are educated at a masters or doctorate level, and receive extensive education and clinical training before sitting for national certification examinations to demonstrate their knowledge and competency. APRNs bring their nursing focus and medical model expertise to provide the comprehensive, patient-focused, and holistic care to the often challenging and vulnerable VA population.

Again, I commend the VHA's efforts to ensure that our nation's Veterans have access to the high quality care they deserve. Allowing these APRNs to practice within their full scope will help ensure Veterans are able to receive this care in a timely manner. I encourage you to advance the approval process to recognize these clinicians as full practice providers within the VA healthcare system.

If I can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact me or NPAM president, Andrea Schram at NPAMPresident@npedu.com.

Sincerely,

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