

December 8, 2009

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA
American Medical Association
515 N. State Street
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear Dr. Maves:

The undersigned organizations are responding to your request to the nurse practitioner (NP) community for feedback about the Nurse Practitioners module of the AMA Scope of Practice Data Series. The document contains numerous factual misrepresentations and misleading conclusions. We do not accept the AMA's attempt to change the perceptions of NP practice as anything other than fully qualified professionals working within a legally established scope of practice. The professional organizations representing nurse practitioners and the larger nursing community will ensure that the public and policy makers have accurate and unbiased information about our profession.

A multitude of studies that demonstrate the safety and high quality of care provided by nurse practitioners appear to have been disregarded in the module. As evidenced by the bias of cited material, the document serves an advocacy purpose rather than presenting a comprehensive assessment of the nurse practitioner profession. It is not appropriate for one health professional group to attempt to discredit the quality of education, credentialing and practice of members of another profession. A thorough and objective review of the comprehensive data would have found overwhelming evidence of the high quality of care provided by nurse practitioners.

As the AMA has recognized in its own policies, the determination of the scope, education and credentialing of a profession is the responsibility of that particular profession. No medical society has the legal authority or professional expertise to make such determinations for NPs or any other health care profession. Moreover, the use of "limited license provider" to describe NPs is a misnomer and misleading. Nurse practitioners are fully licensed professionals who practice within their legal authority and who have established a reputation for providing safe, effective, high quality care to their patients.

During a time when the nation faces a failing health care delivery system with so many unmet health care needs, the individual health care professions should make it a high priority to evaluate their own areas for improvement and ways to enhance, not further restrict, patients' access to health care. Actions to marginalize other health care professions do not achieve this objective and ultimately fail the patients who should be the focus of our professional efforts. Nurse practitioners and the nursing community would like to work in partnership, not opposition, with our physician colleagues to address the real health care needs of our patients.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Certification Corporation
American College of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nurses Association
American Nurses Credentialing Center
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
Association of Faculties of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
Emergency Nurses Association

Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National League for Nursing
National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Oncology Nurses Society
Pediatric Nursing Certification Board
The National Certification Corporation for the Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing