

APRN talking points for speaking with patients

As an APRN, you are your own most effective advocate for change at the state Capitol. However, your patients, too, have a vested interest in changes that would improve access to quality, affordable health care. Even though issues like full practice authority affect every Oklahoman, many people are unaware of, or uneducated about, the issue. Not every APRN may be comfortable discussing legislative issues with patients. Others may have patients who are more than willing to advocate. Below are talking points for speaking with patients about the issue.

- An advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) is a registered nurse with a master's degree or doctorate, nationally certified and licensed by the state nursing board. They are trained and educated to assess and diagnose patients, perform treatments and procedures, manage patient health, order and interpret tests, prescribe medication and more, depending on their area of specialization.
- Full practice authority would allow APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training.
- Currently, APRNs must have an agreement for supervision of prescriptive authority with a physician — and pay the physician for that agreement — ***even though the physician does not see the APRN's patients.***
- Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia offer APRNs full practice authority. Many studies have shown no difference in the quality of care provided by APRNs when compared to care provided by physicians.
- Full practice authority would make affordable health care more accessible across our state, especially in rural areas that have a difficult time attracting and keeping health care workers.
- Full practice authority would also remove needless regulation and red tape with the potential of lowering health care costs. These legislative changes would directly benefit ALL Oklahomans.
- The state also restricts which medications APRNs can prescribe, even though they are educated and trained to administer a broad spectrum of prescriptions. This restriction is particularly burdensome on our patients with chronic or acute pain and some behavioral disorders.
- If you are supportive of APRNs and full practice authority, please contact your state legislators. Share with them your experiences with an APRN. Let them know how granting them their full scope of practice will benefit you and the state as a whole.