

Melinda Martland
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Dear Lynda Dalessio,

I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining the current scope of practice for nurse practitioners (NPs) in Rhode Island. Nurse practitioners play an essential role in our healthcare system, providing high-quality, accessible, and safe care to patients across the state. Any attempt to limit or restrict their scope of practice would negatively impact patient care and access to healthcare services.

Nurse practitioners are highly trained professionals with advanced education and clinical experience. They are skilled in diagnosing, treating, and managing a wide range of health conditions, from common illnesses to chronic diseases. Numerous studies have shown that NPs provide care that is comparable in quality to that of physicians, with similar or even better patient outcomes in some cases. In Rhode Island, NPs have long demonstrated their ability to deliver excellent and safe care, meeting the needs of diverse patient populations.

Furthermore, NPs are particularly critical in addressing the growing shortage of primary care providers, especially in Rhode Island where there is extremely limited access to primary care providers. Working as a clinical pharmacist at Kent Hospital for over a decade, I have seen firsthand the shortage of primary care providers in our state leading to overfilled emergency rooms, poor follow up post hospital discharge and ultimately, increased overall healthcare costs. NPs serve as a crucial resource for patients who might otherwise face long wait times or limited access to care. Reducing the scope of practice for nurse practitioners would only exacerbate these challenges, limiting patients' ability to receive timely and effective care.

The current scope of practice for NPs in Rhode Island reflects a balanced approach that allows them to use their full training and expertise while ensuring patient safety. There is no evidence to suggest that restricting their practice would lead to better patient outcomes. In fact, such restrictions could have the opposite effect, creating unnecessary barriers to care and further increasing healthcare costs.

For the benefit of Rhode Island's patients and the sustainability of our delicate healthcare system, I urge you to oppose any changes that would limit the scope of nurse practitioners. Maintaining their ability to practice to the full extent of their education and training is essential to ensuring high-quality, safe, and accessible care for all residents.

There are several nurse practitioners at Kent Hospital that provide excellent care and that I trust implicitly. I have never in my 14 year career as a clinical pharmacist thought that it would make sense to reduce the scope of a nurse practitioner in Rhode Island. I would also like to specify one nurse practitioner, Emily Weibel, that works tirelessly both in primary care but also working to provide

aesthetics care and provides excellent care. Reducing any scope of a nurse practitioner such as this will ultimately lead to worsened patient outcomes, barriers to care, and increased overall healthcare costs for patients of our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter. Please feel free to reach out with any questions as I would be happy to speak in further detail at any time as I feel very passionately about this.

Sincerely,
Melinda Martland
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