

Public Hearing on HB 1245 by House Health, Welfare, and Institutions Committee of the Virginia General Assembly Comments to Hearing in Richmond 1/27/22.

My name is Melody Eaton. I am a member and President for the Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing (VACN) and I am speaking on behalf of VACN.

First, I would like to thank both the Governor and members of the General Assembly for recognition of the important role that Nurse Practitioners play in healthcare delivery within The Commonwealth. As we encounter rising healthcare challenges with care access and equity, this advanced practice role increases in value and demand.

Today, I would like to speak in support of the HB1245 from an educational preparation perspective in Virginia. First, all Virginia Nurse Practitioner (NP) education programs must meet national standards of practice and all VACN programs meet national accreditation standards. All NP programs require a minimum number of clinical practice hours with Virginia schools requiring more hours based on competency outcome measures. The following criteria must be met for each program.

- All NP Curricula must meet:
 - Core Competencies for NP practice
 - Competencies for Population Focus Areas
 - American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)/Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Essentials
 - Focused courses on:
 - Physical Assessment
 - Pathophysiology
 - Pharmacology
 - Some focus areas require a second pharmacology and or pathophysiology class
- Practicum
 - Appropriate hours (varies based on degree -MSN versus DNP and population focus)
 - Meet Population-Focused Competencies (knowledge/skills)
 - Meet National Taskforce (NTF) Standards for Quality NP Education
 - Clarifies requirements of Clinical/Practicum
 - Experience
 - Site
 - Preceptor Qualifications
 - Faculty Qualifications
 - Knowledge/Skills

Competency checks and balances include recertification requirements, and pharmacy certification, licensure and opioid delivery requirements equivalent to MDs.

Without doubt, Nurse Practitioner graduates are prepared academically and in practice hour competencies to assume full practice authority upon graduation and certification. Virginia

Nursing Schools/Colleges train exceptional NP graduates who are prepared for full practice authority.

Nurse Practitioners definitely make THE DIFFERENCE in providing quality patient care. It would, in fact, be very menacing to imagine a future Virginia healthcare system without expedited Nurse Practitioner full practice authority to meet the demands of our current healthcare challenges in Virginia.

For these reasons the Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing requests your support of HB1245 sponsored by Delegate Dawn Adams. Your support of this legislation will help the provide quality healthcare delivery in the Commonwealth.

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