Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are valued members of the health care team, but their medical education and training does not come close to matching that which is required of physicians. That is why the AMA Advocacy Resource Center works to safeguard patient safety by opposing measures to expand APRN scope of practice that are introduced each year in state legislatures.

Eight proposed scope of practice expansions for APRNs—nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives and clinical nurse specialists—have been stopped this year due to the AMA’s collaborative efforts with state medical and osteopathic associations and national specialty societies working with state lawmakers.

Similar efforts have taken place involving proposed scope-of-practice expansions for naturopaths, optometrists, pharmacists, physician assistants, psychologists and podiatrists. Learn more with this comprehensive legislative review (PDF) of the AMA’s outstanding state-level advocacy efforts on scope of practice and a wide array of other vital issues.

Not all efforts have been successful. Expansion was approved in Delaware and Utah, but scope of practice legislation has been defeated in these eight states so far this year.

Florida

Proposed legislation would have allowed all nurse practitioners (NPs) to practice independently, expanding the law enacted last year which only allows NPs practicing in primary care to practice independently.
Kansas

Proposed legislation would have allowed all APRNs the ability to provide medical care without any physician involvement and allow them to prescribe controlled substances.

Kentucky

Proposed legislation would have eliminated physician oversight for prescribing and would have allowed all APRNs to provide medical care without any physician involvement, including diagnosing and treating patients, and prescribing medications.

Louisiana

Legislation proposed in the state House of Representatives would have allowed all APRNs to provide medical care without any physician involvement, including diagnosing and treating patients, and prescribing medications.

Maine

Proposed legislation would have removed the transition-to-practice requirement, thereby allowing all APRNs to practice without any physician involvement, including newly graduated APRNs.

Mississippi

Proposed legislation would have allowed all APRNs the ability to provide medical care without any physician involvement and would have also allowed NPs to provide oversight of other APRNs, including certified registered nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives, and clinical nurse specialists, without any education or training in these specialized areas of care.

Tennessee

Copyright 1995 - 2021 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.
Proposed legislation that would have removed physician oversight was defeated.

Texas

A proposed bill that would have drastically expanded the scope of practice of APRNs, including allowing them to prescribe without any physician involvement, was defeated.

Patients deserve care led by physicians—the most highly educated, trained and skilled health care professionals. Learn more about how the AMA uses research, advocacy and education to vigorously defend the practice of medicine against scope-of-practice expansions that threaten patient safety.