

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-179

2
3 REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND
4 LABOR STUDY THE ROLE OF AN ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE AS
5 A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER WITHIN THE ARKANSAS MEDICAID PROGRAM.
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7 WHEREAS, the demand for primary care services in the United States is
8 expanding and expected to continue expanding over the next several years as a
9 result of the growth and aging of the population of the United States and
10 enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. 111-148;
11 and
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13 WHEREAS, in the Primary Care Needs Assessment report dated August 2015,
14 the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care of the Department of Health
15 identified three (3) main challenges to healthcare progress in Arkansas:

16 (1) The supply, capacity, and distribution of primary care
17 providers in Arkansas is not sufficient to meet the healthcare needs of
18 Arkansans and is not likely to change in the short term;

19 (2) There are gaps in healthcare access, quality of care, and
20 geographic barriers that negatively impact care in rural and underserved
21 communities and populations; and

22 (3) The demand for healthcare services will be driven by a
23 rapidly increasing population of elderly Arkansans and a general population
24 that experiences differentially high rates of chronic disease; and
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26 WHEREAS, Arkansas has over thirty-five thousand (35,000) registered
27 nurses and two thousand three hundred eighty-two (2,382) advanced practice
28 registered nurses; and
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30 WHEREAS, one thousand six hundred ninety-nine (1,699) advanced practice
31 registered nurses have prescriptive authority; and
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33 WHEREAS, the Arkansas Medicaid Program, including the Arkansas Patient-
34 Centered Medical Home model and the Medicaid Primary Care Case Management
35 Program, does not recognize advanced practice registered nurses as primary

1 care providers despite the advanced education and training in primary care
2 received by an advanced practice registered nurse; and
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4 WHEREAS, the Kaiser Family Foundation's article *Tapping Nurse*
5 *Practitioners to Meet Rising Demands For Primary Care* (January 2015) found
6 that close to ninety percent (90%) of advanced practice registered nurses are
7 prepared in primary care, advanced practice registered nurses can manage
8 eighty to ninety percent (80 - 90%) of care provided by primary care
9 physicians, and advanced practice registered nurses are significantly more
10 likely than primary care physicians to practice in urban and rural areas,
11 provide health care in a wider range of community settings, and serve a high
12 proportion of uninsured patients and other vulnerable populations; and
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14 WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine's report, *The Future of Nursing:*
15 *Leading Change, Advancing Health* (2010), issued recommendations to ensure
16 that registered nurses, particularly advanced practice registered nurses,
17 practice to the fullest extent of their licensure, accreditation,
18 certification, and education as well as perform as full partners in the
19 redesign of health care in the United States; and
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21 WHEREAS, these recommendations serve as a blueprint toward a healthcare
22 system which provides patient-centered and evidence-based quality health care
23 with improved health outcomes by utilizing nurses, which are the nation's
24 largest healthcare workforce; and
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26 WHEREAS, a 2010 study by the Institute of Medicine shows that a higher
27 concentration of primary care providers, particularly advanced practice
28 registered nurses, results in a higher quality of health care and lower costs
29 for health care; and
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31 WHEREAS, other studies demonstrate that advanced practice registered
32 nurses are more likely to practice in medically underserved areas than
33 primary care physicians, which increases access for Medicaid beneficiaries;
34 and
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1 WHEREAS, several states across the nation, including Connecticut,
2 Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and
3 Vermont, have amended state laws to expand the scope of practice for advanced
4 practice registered nurses to practice primary care as a primary care
5 provider; and
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7 WHEREAS, a 2012 report by the National Governors Association found that
8 health care provided by an advanced practice registered nurse "is comparable"
9 to health care provided by a physician "on several process and outcome
10 measures" and advanced practice registered nurses "may provide improved
11 access to care"; and
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13 WHEREAS, if regulatory and statutory barriers to utilization as a
14 primary care provider were removed, advanced practice registered nurses have
15 the potential to create new access points for patients and Medicaid
16 beneficiaries throughout the state by opening new clinics and to increase the
17 employment rates of the state by employing new individuals in the
18 communities; and
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20 WHEREAS, for the health of its citizens, the General Assembly should
21 pursue efforts to improve access to health care by utilizing the adaptive
22 capacity of advanced practice registered nurses across the healthcare
23 continuum; and
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25 WHEREAS, the opportunity exists to more fully utilize advanced practice
26 registered nurses in the healthcare system of Arkansas,
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28 NOW THEREFORE,

29 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF
30 THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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32 THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study the
33 role of an advanced practice registered nurse as a primary care provider
34 within the Arkansas Medicaid Program to the fullest extent of their
35 licensure, accreditation, certification, and education.
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1 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Arkansas Nurses
2 Association and the Arkansas State Board of Nursing shall provide assistance
3 to the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor to perform this
4 study.

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6 Respectfully submitted,

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10 Representative Dan Sullivan

11 District 53

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14 By: JMB/JMB

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