



June 18, 2014

The Honorable Sloan D. Gibson
Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Gibson:

On behalf of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), we would like to reiterate our unwavering support for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) work to modernize the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook, and urge you to advance the approval process.

More specifically, we commend the VHA's proposal to recognize Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs, including nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists and clinical nurse specialists) as full practice providers when providing care in a VA facility. We believe this will further facilitate timely delivery of high-quality health care to our nation's service men and women.

APRNs are educated to provide evidence-based care to specific patient populations and are qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions. APRNs practice in a wide diversity of healthcare settings and are often found in underserved communities as the sole advanced practice clinician. The Federal Trade Commission, the Institute of Medicine, the National Governors Association and other policy bodies have validated the quality of care APRNs provide and the impact it makes on not only health care competition, but access to services in great demand.

In light of the intense scrutiny faced by the Department, the expansion of independent practice authority to APRNs will provide timely, cost effective access to veterans who need an immediate remedy to the nationwide problem of delays to critical health care services. Granting independent practice to APRNs should not be allowed to become a political issue but one based on peer viewed empirical evidence that supports quality, cost effective patient care and timely access.

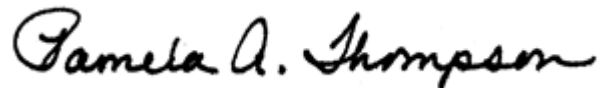
The VHA's recommendation to acknowledge full practice authority for APRNs supports the profession to practice to the full extent of APRN education and training. This in turn will help ensure an adequate supply of health providers are available to care for the veteran population served by the VA.

Thank you for your service. Please direct any questions to Jo Ann Webb at jwebb@aha.org.

Sincerely,



Linda Knodel, MHA, MSN, NE-BC, CPHQ, FACHE
2014 AONE President



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