



Clinical Nurse Specialist Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 481

The Clinical Nurse Specialists of Michigan appreciate this opportunity to share information about our advanced practice role and the importance of Senate Bill 481.

What are Clinical Nurse Specialists?

Clinical Nurse Specialists are advanced practice nurses prepared at the master's level and certified to provide expert comprehensive nursing care directly to patients, support and develop registered nurses at the point of care, and serve as leaders in redefining healthcare systems to improve access, quality and safety in a cost-effective manner. We are one of the advanced practice nursing roles recognized by all national nursing organizations and included in the Institute for Medicine's report on the *Future of Nursing*. A report recently filed in April of 2012 from Michigan's Department of Community Health entitled *Task Force for Nursing Practice* recommends that Clinical Nurse Specialists be recognized as advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) in the State of Michigan. The report further states, "To improve access to health care for Michigan residents, all statutory and regulatory barriers to full independent practice for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) must be removed. APRNs must be able to practice in Michigan to the full extent of their required education and competencies." Currently, 43 states recognize Clinical Nurse Specialists as APRNs and provide title protection for the role. The State of Michigan has not yet recognized Clinical Nurse Specialists in the Public Health Code.

What do Clinical Nurse Specialists do?

Clinical Nurse Specialists are directly responsible for reducing readmission rates, decreasing hospital length of stay, reducing mistakes and omissions in care, and improving quality and safety of care, while helping to contain or reduce healthcare costs. Clinical Nurse Specialists provide health care services to patients and families in a variety of settings, but the majority of them work in inpatient hospital settings. Clinical Nurse Specialists are clinical experts in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness and the delivery of evidence-based nursing care that helps patients reach their health goals. Clinical Nurse Specialists coordinate care for complex and chronically ill patients across settings, from outpatient clinics through inpatient stays and back home again. We improve clinical outcomes and protect patient safety, eliminate unnecessary care, improve care for those with chronic illness, and reduce the cost of care. We help solve complex care problems and promote self-care for individual patients and their families. We translate new science into practice improvements at the bedside. We educate, mentor and coach nursing students and registered nurses in the work place. This contributes to a competent work force that attracts and retains nurses within our state.

Impact of Clinical Nurse Specialists in Michigan

We would like to share some specific examples of the impact of the Clinical Nurse Specialist role within healthcare delivery systems in the State of Michigan. Clinical Nurse

Specialists in multiple hospitals in Michigan led or co-led system changes that have substantially decreased catheter associated bloodstream infections and ventilator acquired pneumonia in the intensive care units. This has decreased deaths from these infections statewide. Through the creation of a healthy work environment, Clinical Nurse Specialists in an urban critical care service saved \$2 million in orientation costs for new nurses by retaining experienced ones. A Clinical Nurse Specialist led a pediatric posterior spinal fusion project at the University of Michigan Mott Children's Hospital that improved patient postoperative outcomes and shortened hospital stays by one to two days per patient. A conservative estimate for the cost savings of this program is \$130,000 per year. More importantly, the children are recovering from the surgery better and faster and hospitals around the country are following Michigan's example.

Importance of Senate Bill 481 to Clinical Nurse Specialists

A critical part of the legislation for Clinical Nurse Specialists is title protection. We are the only advanced practice nursing role that is not cited in the current Michigan Public Health statute. Title protection would require specific qualifications and standards for Clinical Nurse Specialists to practice in Michigan and would protect the public from people using the title without the appropriate educational preparation and national certification. An additional benefit of the legislation for the citizens of Michigan is the ability of APRNs to practice to the fullest extent of our education as independent healthcare providers. We believe that the option of prescriptive authority would enable Clinical Nurse Specialists to order the necessary medical equipment, referral services such as physical therapy or occupational therapy, or home health care that are necessary components for coordinating the best care for patients.

The Clinical Nurse Specialists of Michigan would like to thank the members of the Committee for your consideration of this testimony and know that passage of this legislation is critical to the health, safety and well-being of the citizens of Michigan.

Examples in professional literature of the work of Clinical Nurse Specialists:

Custer, M.L. (2010). Outcomes of clinical nurse specialist-initiated system-level standardized glucose management. *Clinical Nurse Specialist*, 24(3):132-9.

Dammeyer, J. A., Mapili, C. D., et.al. (2012). Nurse-led change: A statewide multidisciplinary collaboration targeting intensive care unit delirium. *Critical Care Nursing Quarterly*, 35(1),2-14.

Kilpack, V., Boehm, J., Smith, M., Mudge, B. (1991). Using research-based interventions to decrease patient falls. *Applied Nursing Research*, 4(2), 50-5.

Lombness, P.M. (1994). Difference in length of stay with care managed by clinical nurse specialists or physician assistants. *Clinical Nurse Specialist*, 8(5), 253-260.

Sutton CD, Garcea G, Pollard C, Berry DP, Dennison AR (2005). The introduction of a nutrition clinical nurse specialist results in a reduction in the rate of catheter sepsis. *Clinical Nutrition*, 24(2):220-3.

Swindle, R.W., Rao, J.K., et.al. (2003). Integrating clinical nurse specialists into the care of primary care patients with depression. *The International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*, 33(1), 17-37.