

DOCTOR DAY 2024

Advocacy at the Capitol



Allowing APRNs to Practice Independently: A Thoughtful, Moderated Approach to Improve Senate Bill 145/Assembly Bill 154

The Issue:

Legislation currently pending in the 2023-2024 state legislature (Senate Bill 145 and Assembly Bill 154) will allow certain advanced practice nurses (APRNs) full independent practice, meaning the state will not require supervisory or collaborative relationships with physicians. This is a fundamental change to the physician-led, team-based system currently benefiting Wisconsin patients.

Physician groups support sensible modifications to the legislation that will ensure a more measured entry into this new health care environment. These suggestions are consistent with those raised last session for a similar proposal – suggestions that were not adopted, leading Governor Tony Evers to veto that bill.

Status:

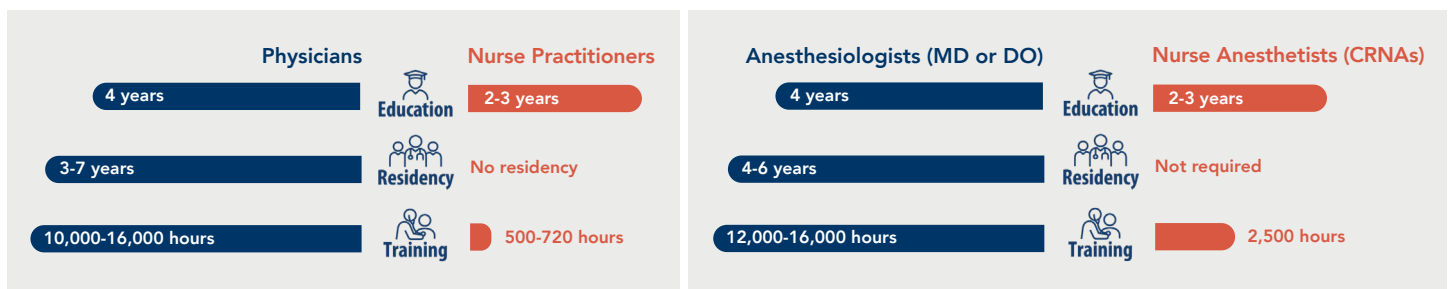
The State Senate on October 23, 2023 amended SB 145 to require three years (5,760 hours) of real-world experience working with a physician or a dentist before being allowed to practice independently. This was an increase from two years (3,840 hours). The full Senate then passed the bill on a 23-9 vote. The Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care held a public hearing on November 15, 2023, and has scheduled a vote on the bill for January 17, 2024.

The Sensible Modifications:

Physician groups believe the following modifications are the minimum necessary to ensure patients receive higher quality care and better understand the credentials of who is providing that care:

- Requiring four (4) years of real-world, team-based care experience before an APRN can advance to practice independently.
- Including “Truth in Advertising” title protection language to help ensure patients better understand who is providing the care they need.
- Ensuring that a physician specializing in pain medicine collaborates with independent APRNs (those not directly connected to a hospital or health care system) providing pain management care. This ensures that complex pain care can be provided more safely.

Physician and Nurse Training Experiences¹



Why This is Important:

Because a person’s health can be their most important priority, every health care professional has an important role to play in how patients get their care. Physicians, APRNs and most importantly patients benefit from team-based care. If a certain profession wishes to break away from the team-based care model, any legislation empowering a move away from team-based care should ensure that independent practitioners have the education, training, and experience patients deserve. That legislation should also ensure patients will better understand who is providing their care.

¹Data collected from American Medical Association, <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/scope-of-practice-physician-training-np.pdf>