

# Template Letter from Board of Nursing to Supporters

Name of Board of Nursing  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2

Dear (Supporter Name):

The (insert name of board of nursing) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN®) request your endorsement of the enclosed proposal.

NCSBN is a not-for-profit organization founded out of recognition that in order to safeguard the public, the regulation of nurses needed to be a separate entity from the organization representing professional nurses. The member boards of the 60 U.S. state and territorial boards of nursing, which comprise NCSBN, protect the public by assuring that safe and competent nursing care is provided by licensed nurses. NCSBN is the vehicle through which boards of nursing, including the (board of nursing), act and counsel together on matters of common interest. These member boards are charged with the responsibility of providing regulatory excellence for public health, safety and welfare.

Although NCSBN is national in its scope, the board of nursing in each jurisdiction has oversight of its unique nursing laws, which establish the parameters for nursing practice within the jurisdiction. Currently, jurisdictions vary widely in its regulation of nurses. Nurses may not care for patients across state lines without a separate license for each jurisdiction, and a nurse's practice may be restricted due to the variation amongst jurisdictions. The skills of the nurse do not change from one jurisdiction to the next, but the law does. These barriers create an enormous impediment to access to care for all patients nationwide.

Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) include certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and certified nurse practitioners (CNPs). Over the past several decades, the number of APRNs has increased and their capabilities have expanded; they have become a highly valued and an integral part of the health care system. There are currently more than 250,000 APRNs in the U.S. providing care in a wide array of practice settings, including hospitals, physician offices, home care, nursing homes, schools and various types of clinics. Because of the importance of APRNs in caring for the current and future health needs of patients, the education, accreditation, certification and licensure of APRNs needs to be effectively aligned in order to continue to assure patient safety, while at the same time, expanding patient access to care.

In 2008 NCSBN's Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education was introduced. This model is aimed at public protection by promoting APRN uniformity in professional standards across all jurisdictions. Uniformity of national standards and regulation not only allows for the mobility of nurses, it also serves the public by increasing access to care. Currently, each jurisdiction devises its own standards in regard to APRNs. This has resulted in a huge diversity of rules and regulations between jurisdictions. The lack of uniformity between jurisdictions leads to confusion on the part of the public, profession and related fields, especially considering APRN titles differ from one jurisdiction to the next. The need for standardization also affects the livelihood of practicing APRNs and their ability to relocate to areas experiencing health care shortages. An APRN may have extensive experience in one jurisdiction, but is made immobile because moving to another jurisdiction would mean being subject to a different standard of practice.

The Consensus Model was developed by 48 nursing organizations nationwide. Every APRN organization in the country has pledged their support of these standards.

We are asking for official endorsement by (insert name of organization) of this important document. The following are the basic recommendations that would affect APRNs and the many patients to whom they provide care:

- Establish graduate level nursing education as the level of academic requirement for APRN licensure. APRN students are licensed registered nurses and are required to take advanced courses in many areas, including pharmacology, as well as extensive clinical practice hours, in order to earn a graduate degree. Currently, there are no set educational standards for the education of APRNs across all jurisdictions.
- Require nursing programs who prepare APRNs to adopt a more standardized curriculum to ensure greater consistency in academic preparation of APRN students.

- Establish the requirement for professional certification for APRN licensure. Graduates of nursing programs are required to take and pass a certification examination in their area of APRN specialty. This exam helps to establish competency. APRNs are held to the professional standards established by the certifying body, in addition to the jurisdictional nursing laws.
- Adopt the APRN title. Use of the title “advanced practice registered nurse (APRN)” will improve the public’s understanding of their care providers. The goal is for this title to be adopted by every jurisdiction to provide an easily recognized professional designation. At a minimum, an individual must legally represent themselves, including in a legal signature, as an APRN and by the specialty role (CNP, CNM, CRNA, CNS). For example, the legal title for nurse practitioner would read: Susan Smith, APRN, CNP.
- Allow independent practice for APRNs. In many jurisdictions, APRNs are required to maintain an official relationship with a physician in order to practice. Removal of the mandatory connection to any other profession will decrease barriers to provision of care. Numerous studies published over the past 30 years have shown that APRNs provide safe, high quality care, often to underserved areas throughout the U.S. Independent APRN practice will increase access to care for all consumers.

The (board of nursing) and NCSBN respectfully request (insert name of organization)’s consideration of these proposed changes to the regulations of APRNs and request your endorsement of the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation. The adoption of these recommendations will help to ensure that all APRNs have met the highest standards for practice and that the same high standards are held in every jurisdiction nationwide.

For more information about the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation please visit [www.ncsbn.org/170.htm](http://www.ncsbn.org/170.htm).

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Yours,

Your Name

Your Title

Your Contact Information