



GAPNA's Policy Priorities

The Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA) represents the interests of all advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who work with older adults. The GAPNA Health Affairs Committee is dedicated to local, state, and federal advocacy to improve access to high quality care for older adults. America's aging population continues to grow and is expected to be more than 70 million by 2030, necessitating an enhanced focus on education, advocacy, policy, and research. Given this, the Health Affairs Committee needs to be proactive in advocating, developing, and proposing legislation that will optimize the health and care of older adults. The efforts of the Health Affairs Committee will support initiatives to inform practice and generate policy development in order to meet the unique needs of older adults and the providers who care for them.

1. Optimize Care of Older Adults

Engage in opportunities that promote the role of APRNs with specific focus on removing barriers for practice that impact the quality of care provided to older adults.

Removing Barriers – Advocate for all APRNs to perform to their full scope of practice*

- Revise state licensure laws to accomplish full practice authority for all APRNs
- Streamline care with comprehensive APRN signature authority
- Advocate for policies and procedures that support APRNs performing to their full scope of practice in all care settings.
- Advocate for recognition of APRNs through reimbursement mechanisms

Policy/Legislative Action:

- Advocate for passage of the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act

Quality Patient Healthcare Outcomes

- Promote funding for the conduction, dissemination and translation of research that will improve the care of older adults
- Promote funding for research demonstrating quality, safety and effectiveness of care provided by APRNs

Policy/Legislative Action

- Advocate for The Caring for Family Caregivers (CARE) Act

Models of Care

- Promote the role of APRNs as primary care providers to the public and to other healthcare providers and professionals
- Partner with other healthcare professionals/organizations to redesign, implement, and/or evaluate new models of care
- Support innovative models of care development that promote the health, well-being, and care of older adults in each state



2. **Geriatric Workforce**

Address the gap between the health care needs of an aging population and the number of clinicians adequately trained to care for them. Ensure APRNs possess the education and training to manage the complexities of older adults and their families/carers with multifaceted, multilayered health care needs.

Intra-professional geriatric clinicians

- Advocate for funding to support the education and training of the intra-professional geriatric clinician workforce

Gerontological Specialist

- Recommend APRNs caring for complex older adults pursue ongoing education and clinical experience beyond their initial education, certification and licensure to achieve specialization in gerontological advanced practice nursing.

Inter-professional Team-Based Care

- Advocate for policies affecting the regulation of training in the care of the older adult to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of certified nursing assistants, medication aides, home health aides, community health workers, and other allied health personnel who provide such care.
- Support the engagement of the “point of care” and “just in time” education within each APRN own practices
- Partner with other organizations (AMDA, AGS, NAHCA, AARP, SEIU, ANA, CGNO, Eldercare Alliance etc.) to facilitate improving the competencies of this important segment of the workforce
- Advocate for situational leadership within the intra-professional team to ensure that the person most qualified for a given scenario be identified as the leader (leadership in the group varies depending on the situation).

*Institute of Medicine. (2010). The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health.