



American Association of
NURSE PRACTITIONERS®

Provide Federal Employees Timely Access to Health Care for Workplace Injuries

ACTION NEEDED: Amend the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) to cover services provided to injured federal workers by nurse practitioners (NPs).

Background: NPs are advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who are prepared at the masters or doctoral level to provide primary, acute, chronic and specialty care to patients of all ages and walks of life. Daily practice includes: assessment; ordering, performing, supervising and interpreting diagnostic and laboratory tests; making diagnoses; initiating and managing treatment including prescribing medication and non-pharmacologic treatments; coordinating care; counseling; and educating patients and their families and communities. NPs practice in nearly every health care setting including occupational health, home health, long-term care facilities, clinics, hospitals, Veterans Health Administration and Indian Health Services facilities, emergency rooms, urgent care sites, private physician or NP practices (both managed and owned by NPs), nursing homes, schools, colleges, retail clinics, public health departments, nurse managed clinics, and homeless clinics.

NPs hold prescriptive authority in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. NPs complete more than one billion patient visits annually. NPs are already included in the definition of an “acceptable medical source” by the Social Security Administration for the purposes of certifying that an individual has a medically determinable impairment.

Nationwide, patients are choosing NPs as their health care provider and studies continue to show that NP provided health care is high quality and cost effective. Currently, federal employees can select an NP as their health care provider under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and over half the states authorize NPs to provide the diagnosis and care for a workplace related injury. Contrary to the workers' compensation process in the majority of states, FECA requires that only a physician can make the diagnosis, certify the injury and extent of the disability, and oversee the patient's treatment and care. This barrier places an additional burden on the nearly 2 million federal employees, depriving them from receiving health care from their provider of choice as well as hindering timely access to care and continuity of care.

Request: AANP calls on Members of Congress to introduce legislation to authorize NPs to provide care under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act.