



October 2, 2013

The Honorable Eric Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki,

On behalf of the 40 undersigned organizations representing the Nursing Community, we would like to extend our support to the Veterans Administration (VA) surrounding its work to update the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Nursing Handbook 1180.03. Collectively, the Nursing Community represents nearly one million Registered Nurses, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), nurse executives, nursing students, nursing faculty, and nurse researchers. Our organizations collaborate to advance sound policy decisions that promote improvements to our nation's healthcare system.

We commend your recognition of APRNs (including nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists and clinical nurse specialists) as Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIPs) in the VHA's Nursing Handbook. We believe this will further facilitate timely delivery of high-quality health care to our nation's service men and women. APRNs are educated to provide evidence-based care to specific patient populations and are qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions. APRNs practice in a diversity of healthcare settings and are often depended upon by underserved communities as the sole advanced practice clinician. The VHA's recommendation to acknowledge APRNs as LIPs supports the profession to practice to the full extent of APRN education and training. This in turn will help ensure an adequate supply of LIPs are available to care for the military and Veteran populations.

Again, we applaud the VA for working to recognize APRNs as LIPs as it directly responds to the decades of empirical evidence that shows the care provided by APRNs is of high quality, reduces healthcare costs, and increases access. If our organizations can be of any assistance in this endeavor, please contact convener of the Nursing Community Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto, at Smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Sincerely,

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nursing

American Assembly for Men in Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nurses Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists*
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Nurses Society on Addictions
International Society of Psychiatric Nurses
National American Arab Nurses Association
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Gerontological Nursing Association
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Public Health Nursing Section, American Public Health Association
The Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations

**The Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists supports this initiative but is not a member of the Nursing Community.*