



Support

SB 576 – Health Occupations – Nurse Practitioners – Certifications of Competency and Incapacity

February 11, 2020

EHEA Committee members:

My name is William Sutton and I am a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner in the state of Maryland. Most of my clinical practice takes place, with older adult patients, in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

At times, patients with cognitive deficits require capacity evaluations for continuance of care. I have had physicians ask me to complete such evaluations and I state that such a task is not allowed under Maryland law. I have been involved in countless situations whereby I am unable to complete this task and the given patient experiences a delay in treatment.

I was recently involved in an assisted living care setting where a patient was exhibiting an increase in exit-seeking behavior. This individual had been unwilling to make one of his children a durable power of attorney and medical decision maker. When the facility wished to place the resident on a more secure unit, he refused. An order was placed for me to complete a capacity evaluation. I did not complete this evaluation for the reason stated above. An outside psychologist was consulted and completed the evaluation later in the week.

This story highlights a delay in patient care that may have resulted in an elopement from the facility and possible physical harm. SB 576 will ensure that patients will receive timely, appropriate psychiatric care.

Please contact me, Dr. Elaine Crain, MAAPC's President, (410-703-0556, TheMAAPC@gmail.com) or Lorraine Diana, our Legislative Chair (301-980-8004), for any information you may need about Nurse Practitioners or SB 576. MAAPC is represented in Annapolis by John Favazza (jfavazza@maniscanning.com, 410-263-7882).

I ask you to support allowing psychiatric nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their training and education.

Thank you,

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