



Advocating for Maryland NPs since 1992

Bill: HB 0049 Public Health – Emergency and Allergy Treatment Program – Nurse Practitioners

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, Inc., (NPAM), the only professional association advocating solely for the over 8,011 certified Nurse Practitioners (NPs) licensed in Maryland, and the over 800 active members of NPAM, we are requesting your support for **HB 0049 Public Health – Emergency and Allergy Treatment Program – Nurse Practitioners**, which will add Certified Nurse Practitioners to the list of those healthcare providers authorized to prescribe, dispense, and administer epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPen) in an emergency situation to licensed Maryland camps.

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) are registered nurses with advanced clinical training and education at the Master's or Doctoral level and have successfully passed a national certification exam. NPs have prescriptive authority according to the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). COMAR 10.27.03 authorizes the NP to personally prepare and dispense any drug that a NP is authorized to prescribe in the course of treating a patient.

It is critical for NPs to be added to the list of those healthcare providers that can prescribe, dispense, and administer life-saving medication such as epinephrine in the form of an auto-injector in the youth camp setting. NP's are already authorized to prescribe Epinephrine auto-injectors to licensed Maryland Schools in accordance with MSDE guidelines and the H.R. 2094 School Access to Epinephrine Act. However, the COMAR Emergency Allergy Treatment Program, specific to youth camps, excludes NPs.

In Maryland, there are over 725 camps that serve children ages 3.5 to 18 years old. Thirty-five (35) other states, including Virginia, Delaware, and Texas currently have legislation that allows NPs to prescribe, dispense and administer epinephrine to camps. When an Epinephrine auto-injector is available at camp, children who may have been unaware of a severe allergy to a food or a bee sting, can be quickly treated with life-saving emergency medication during their first exposure. Each year in the U.S., the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America estimates severe reactions to food cause 30,000 emergency room visits, 2,000 hospitalizations, 150 deaths, and, at least 90 to 100 deaths occur in the United States each year due to insect sting anaphylaxis.¹

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Early epinephrine administration is critical for survival in severe anaphylaxis, and allowing NPs to prescribe this medication directly to the camp will increase access to this life-saving medication to children and save lives.

Further, this bill provides NPs the same immunity as Physicians and Pharmacists who currently have immunity from a cause of action when acting in good faith to dispense the epinephrine and necessary paraphernalia.

Thank you for your support of **HB 0049 Public Health – Emergency and Allergy Treatment Program – Nurse Practitioners**. Please contact NPAM Executive Director Beverly Lang should you have questions.

Kindest Regards,

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1. Asthma and Allergy Foundation, 2021. www.aafa.org/allergy-facts. Accessed November 1, 2021.