

Support

HB 278

Titled: Clinical Nurse Specialists - Prescribing

Thank you Delegate Cullison for your generous sponsorship and thank you Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Kelly, and committee members for allowing time to hear our testimony in support of HB 278.

I am Pamela Moss and I'm a clinical nurse specialist in cardiac surgery and critical care with 13 years of experience as a nurse and 7 as a CNS. I am the current president of the Chesapeake Bay Affiliate of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists and have volunteered on several national level committees to update specialty certification exam standards and maintain current scope and standards for CNS practice across the US.

A CNS is one of the four advanced practice registered nurse roles and has been part of the US health care system for more than 60 years. Providing clinical expertise to a complex, specialty population throughout the care continuum is at very foundation of the CNS role. Everything we do stems from our ability to provide direct patient care. But a CNS approaches patient care in holistic manner that enables us to address quality of patient care, mentor nursing staff at the bedside, and work within interdisciplinary teams to promote and drive evidence and research-based care that provide safe, low cost, optimal patient outcomes.

We are all educated at the graduate level and have completed training in advanced physiology, pharmacology, and physical assessment in addition to our area of specialty. Forty states and the US Dept of Veteran Affairs have granted CNSs prescriptive authority.

Prescribing is complex but it involves so much more than just ordering medications. Prescriptive authority would allow the CNS to follow through on their patient care plans, order patient referrals, lab work, diagnostic tests, and even specialty equipment such as a walker, wheelchair, or wound care supplies – allowing us to promote quality care of even the most vulnerable and complex patients.

As a CNS, being able to prescribe is part of my training and well within my ability, however without legislative approval, without your approval, my ability to practice at the full scope of my education and practice is hindered, limiting the care that I can provide for the community that surrounds me. I would ask this committee to please vote favorably, and grant Maryland CNSs prescriptive authority.

I am asking you for a favorable report on HB 278. Thank you!