



STATEMENT OF
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Allowing Clinical Nurse Specialists to Practice to the Extent of Their Education and Training Will Improve Access to Care For Our Veterans

“The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) is pleased to learn that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is [proposing to amend its medical regulations](#) to permit full practice authority of all VA advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) when they are acting within the scope of their VA employment.

Granting full-practice authority to all APRNs, including its clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse anesthetists and nurse midwives, would immediately improve access to vital health care services for our nation’s veterans. Increasing the pool of qualified health professionals will result in streamlining health services, eliminating redundancies and bottlenecks and alleviating delays in care delivery.

It is past time that the VA implement this solution, as recommended in the seminal 2010 report from the Institute of Medicine on the *Future of Nursing*, and allow all APRNs to practice to the full scope of their education and training.

Every day across this country, CNSs provide expert care to patients and their families, support nurses caring for patients at the bedside, help drive practice changes throughout their organizations, and ensure the use of best practices and evidence-based care to achieve the best possible patient outcomes. If every health care setting employed CNSs, more of the care provided would be based on research and best practices, our health care system would be more efficient, and we would all be healthier.”

Sharon Horner, PhD, RN, MC-CNS, FAAN is the President of the 2016-2017 NACNS Board of Directors.

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Founded in 1995, The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists is the only association representing the clinical nurse specialist (CNS). CNSs are advanced practice registered nurses who work in a variety of specialties to ensure high-quality, evidence-based, patient-centered care. As leaders in health care settings, CNSs provide direct patient care and lead initiatives to improve care and clinical outcomes, and reduce costs. NACNS is dedicated to advancing CNS practice and education, removing certification and regulatory barriers, and assuring the public access to quality CNS services.