



## HEALTH CARE REFORM REVIEW COMMITTEE

Chairman Representative Keiser and Committee Members:

I am Gwen Witzel, Family Nurse Practitioner, in Langdon ND. I am a member of the ND Nurse Practitioner Association and I am the current Region 8 Director for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners the national NP organization. I represent six states: ND, MT, SD, UT, WY, CO.

In 2008, the Robert Wood Johnson foundation (RWJF) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) launched a two-year initiative to respond to the need to assess and transform the nursing profession. The committee working on this initiative was charged with producing a report that contained recommendations “for an action-oriented blueprint for the future of nursing, including changes in public and institutional policies at the national, state, and local levels”.

*[The IOM was established in 1970 under the charter of the National Academy of Sciences to provide independent, objective, evidence-based advice to policy makers, health professionals, the private sector, and the public.]*

The committee’s recommendations were published in October, 2010 in the document titled “The Future of Nursing”. I am here today to highlight some of the recommendations that impact Advanced Practice Nursing. This report comes at a time of opportunity in health care resulting from the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which will provide access to care for an additional 32 million Americans.

The committee recommends that **Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training**. In ND, with your help, we have moved forward with this recommendation by passing legislation in 2011 that allowed for Nurse Practitioners to have full practice authority, and then in 2013 by passing legislation to fully adopt the APRN Consensus Model proposed by the ND Board of Nursing. Studies have demonstrated that Nurse Practitioners provide high quality cost effective health care and are one solution to filling the need for primary care providers.

To allow for nurses to practice to the full extent of their education multiple recommendation have been proposed. The first recommendation is to **remove practice barriers to improve access to healthcare**. The report recommends the Federal Trade commission and the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice review existing and proposed state regulations concerning APRNs to identify those that have anticompetitive effects without contributing to the health and safety of the public.

As ND is moving forward in establishing the Insurance Exchange we need to be cognizant of this recommendation. All plans in the exchange/marketplace and operating in ND (ND Blue Cross, Medica and Sanford health Plan) need to be reviewed to insure that plans are held to the non-discrimination language required by the Affordable Care Act that comes into effect January 2014 to ensure that we have adequate points of access and patient choice in provider. You as legislators have the opportunity to pass legislation that holds insurance plans accountable to meet this new requirement.



North Dakota  
Nurse Practitioner Association

North Dakota has the opportunity to transform its health care system. Working together our licensing boards, legislative bodies, educational institutions and health care providers including nurse practitioners and physicians can help insure that the health care system in ND provides seamless affordable quality care that is accessible to all and leads to improved health.

Gwen Witzel APRN, FNP, FAANP  
Family Nurse Practitioner  
CCMH clinic, Langdon ND  
[gtwitzer@utma.com](mailto:gtwitzer@utma.com)  
701-370-1579