

Patrick Connolly  
Maine Medical Association  
LD 961

I am a family physician working in Portland at Martin's Point Health Care for over 30 years. During that time, I have worked collaboratively with Nurse practitioners in my office. In addition, I regularly teach medical students, NP and PA students in my role as a Clinical Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at Tufts School of Medicine.

I am greatly concerned that the proposal to eliminate the supervisory period for new nurse practitioners will leave them unprepared to safely handle the myriad of problems we encounter in primary care.

A family doctor goes to medical school for four years, then does three years of supervised residency training. But the hard part starts when they begin practice, even after seven years of training, they still often see things they haven't seen before. As a senior member of our practice, I routinely give advice to those new providers for problems they have not yet encountered.

There is a saying in medicine, "You don't know what you don't know." Experience is the best teacher and that can only be accomplished by seeing patients, and supervision is crucial to that learning process.

I have seen a large variation in the level of experience that new Nurse Practitioner brings with them. Some have had years of experience as an ER nurse or a Med Surg nurse in the hospital. Others have gone straight from nursing school to NP school, with very little clinical experience.

In order to ensure that Mainers can have confidence that their health care providers are competent and have adequate training, I urge the committee to vote Ought not to Pass on LD 961

Thank you for your consideration.