

Brandon Giberson
Portland

Hello, my name is Brandon Giberson, and I am a born-and-raised Maine resident and proud emergency medicine physician in Brunswick, Maine. I reside in Portland. I am writing to respectfully ask you to oppose LD 295, the bill to remove post-graduate training and supervisory requirements for nurse practitioners.

As you are likely aware, the current law requires nurse practitioners to be licensed under supervision of a physician or an experienced nurse practitioner for 24 months after school.

“A certified nurse practitioner who qualifies as an advanced practice registered nurse must practice, for at least 24 months, under the supervision of a licensed physician or a supervising nurse practitioner or must be employed by a clinic or hospital that has a medical director who is a licensed physician. The certified nurse practitioner shall submit written evidence to the board upon completion of the required clinical experience.”

In stark contrast, the proposed bill, LD 295, would remove this section and make a newly graduated nurse practitioner essentially an equivalent to a practicing physician immediately. The nurse practitioner will be charged with the most sacred task a human can undertake- the responsibility for the lives of others. In order to carry out this same task as a physician, the doctor will have had to complete four years of medical school, at least three years of completely supervised residency training, and often supervised fellowship beyond that.

My specific journey to becoming an emergency medicine physician involved four years of undergraduate education (The University of Maine), three years of clinical research in emergency care (Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/ Harvard Medical School), four years of medical school (University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine) and three years of intensive Emergency Medicine Residency (Emory University). I cannot understate the importance of each of these steps in forming my ability to care for Maines ill and injured with competence. I worked 80 hour weeks for three straight years under direct supervision, nearly 12,500 hours, before feeling as though I could practice independently.

I work every single day in the Emergency Department as the supervising physician for many wonderful nurse practitioners, and they play a vital role in the landscape of medicine in the state of Maine, particularly in rural areas. I do not feel that this should change. However, we absolutely cannot put patients at risk by allowing independent practice of NP's from day one. As you prepare to decide upon LD 295, I ask you to reflect on a very important scenario. If a loved one of yours were to need services where decisions made in seconds to minutes may mean the difference in life or death, who would you want at their bedside? Would you trust this care to the newly graduated nurse practitioner, or would you demand the tried and true team based approach of a nurse practitioner and residency trained physician?

Thank you for your time, and please do not hesitate to reach me if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Brandon Giberson, DO
Attending Physician, Emergency Medicine
Director, Emergency Ultrasound Division
MidCoast Hospital
BlueWater Health
cell: 617-816-3873
email: bgiberson@bluewaterhealth.com