

AAPM&R is Defending the Role of Psychiatrists Against Encroachment from Non-Physicians

The increase of non-physician efforts to expand their scope of practice authority is a continuous battle. Your Academy is committed to fighting for patients' health and safety, and for psychiatrists.

AAPM&R's efforts include engaging in strategic partnerships, advocating on the federal and state levels, and developing psychiatric and patient resources. Here are some highlights of our advocacy efforts to guard against scope of practice encroachment.

Federal and State Advocacy Actions:

- In August, we launched an ongoing Federal grassroots campaign to contact members of Congress and express opposition to H.R. 2713, the *Improving Care and Access to Nurses (I CAN) Act*. This legislation would inappropriately expand scope of practice for non-physician practitioners including nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists and physician assistants.
- In June, we joined the American Medical Association (AMA) and more than 90 medical societies and associations in submitting a letter in opposition to H.R. 2713.
- In May, we organized an ongoing Federal grassroots campaign to contact members of Congress and express opposition to S. 131/H.R. 618, the *Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act*. To date, Academy members have responded strongly to this campaign, sending more than **570 letters to Congress** to stop the expansion of scope of practice for nurse practitioners and physician assistants under the federal Worker's Compensation Program.
- In March, we launched a grassroots campaign for Academy members in New York to successfully stop the elimination of oversight of physician assistants in Part W of the Governor's proposed Health and Mental Hygiene Budget (A.3007/S.4007). Academy members sent more than 80 letters to state officials. The final budget was signed by the Governor on May 3 and the provision eliminating the oversight of physician assistants was removed.

Scope of Practice Tools and Resources:

AAPM&R provides valuable resources for psychiatrists to educate their patients and caregivers, and to guard against scope creep and its negative impact on patient care.

- For a comprehensive summary of psychiatrist qualifications as compared to other healthcare providers, we developed the AAPM&R Comparison of U.S. Education and Training for Psychiatrists and Other Healthcare Providers resource. This clarifies the difference in U.S. education and training for psychiatrists and common professions in healthcare that use the term "Doctor."
- In June, in collaboration with the AMA's Scope of Practice Partnership, AAPM&R's Scope of Practice Workgroup released a new resource aimed at empowering patients to ask questions about the qualifications of the person providing their healthcare, entitled the "Ask for a Physician" Patient Card.
- To further support efforts to increase truth in advertising for the provision of PM&R services, AAPM&R's Quality, Practice, Policy and Research (QPPR) Committee developed an official position statement addressing the inappropriate use and marketing of the term "physical medicine and rehabilitation" and its derivatives.

AAPM&R is Defending the Role of Psychiatrists Against Encroachment from Non-Physicians (Continued)

Scope of Practice Partnerships:

Recognizing that scope of practice encroachment affects all physicians and medical specialties, AAPM&R is a long-time member of the AMA Scope of Practice Partnership. This alliance gives AAPM&R the ability to partner with the AMA, American Osteopathic Association, national medical societies, state medical associations and state osteopathic medical associations on a range of scope of practice initiatives every year.

AAPM&R also works directly with other specialty organizations to ensure that patient safety is not compromised by proposals to inappropriately expand scope for non-physician providers. AAPM&R recently worked with the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM) to provide input on policy being formulated by the North American Spine Society (NASS) on intraoperative neurophysiological monitoring (IONM) services. This draft coverage policy recommended allowing non-physician providers to perform IONM services without physician supervision, an inappropriate expansion of scope that would compromise patient safety and remove physicians from the care team for patients receiving these services. AAPM&R and AANEM sent a joint letter disavowing this policy recommendation, and asked for NASS to reconsider.

AAPM&R thanks the members of our Quality, Practice, Policy and Research Committee, Scope of Practice Workgroup, Health Policy & Legislation Committee (HP&L), State Advocacy Committee and grassroots volunteers for their continued commitment to our advocacy efforts.

Learn more about AAPM&R's advocacy efforts or contact us at healthpolicy@aapmr.org. Visit the Academy's Member Action Center and sign up to receive Advocacy Alerts, so you can engage on federal and state issues that impact your specialty.