



## **2017 Legislative Session**

### **Scope of Practice Act**

Each legislative session brings another, or repeated, request from an allied health group to expand its scope of practice. Some requested changes to a provider's scope of practice have the potential of being critical patient safety issues. Legislators are required to make a medical judgment on the basis of little objective and analytical documentation. Legislators and their staff report these bills are confusing and misleading and that they are not qualified to make decisions in these areas.

NMMS recommends the establishment of a Scope of Practice Act. The Act will require that any proposed changes to the scope of practice of a health care provider be systematically analyzed, researched, and vetted before those proposed changes can come before the legislature.

The Act will establish a scope of practice committee composed of eight members, four appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and four appointed by the Senate Committees' Committee. Members will be appointed from each chamber in same political proportions as prevails in that chamber, with a one member minimum from each party. No action will be taken by the committee if a majority of the total membership from either chamber rejects such action.

The committee will review proposed changes to an existing scope of practice, proposed regulation of an unregulated health profession, or the proposed establishment of a licensing board.

As part of their review process, the committee will collect data from the proponent and all other appropriate persons, ensure public notice of the committee's proceedings, and invite testimony from persons with special knowledge in the field.

The committee will assess the proposal on the potential harm or benefit to consumers, impact on access to and quality of health care, and the adequacy of training of those whose scope of practice would be changed by the proposal. The committee will summarize its findings and recommendations in a final report to the standing committees to which legislation is referred.

This process of committee review and evaluation of each proposed change in scope of practice will provide an objective, well-researched, evidence-based analysis of the requested statutory change to state law makers prior to their consideration in standing committees.

NMMS asks that NMMS members contact their legislators and encourage them to support this legislation.

For more information please contact:

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