

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

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Certified Nurse-Midwives Fall Short in Achieving Equitable Reimbursement Under Medicare

By Heather Bradford, CNM, ARNP

As Chair of the American College of Nurse-Midwives' Government Affairs Committee, and member since 2001, I have been advocating for equitable reimbursement for certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) under Medicare for a LONG time. This past year, we came really close to achieving this accomplishment, but for various reasons, we fell short. Currently, CNMs are reimbursed at 65% of the Medicare physician fee schedule, reducing access to quality comprehensive women's health care services to seniors and disabled women of childbearing age who are covered by the Medicare program. Currently, nurse practitioners receive 85% of what physicians receive, and nurse-anesthetists receive 100%.

Our provision had unprecedented support in both the House and the Senate, and did include co-sponsorship from WA federal legislators Senators Murray and Cantwell, as well as Reps. Larsen and Smith. It passed in the House of Representatives as part of the Child Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007 (CHAMP Act) in August of 2007. Unfortunately, it was not included in the Senate version, called the *Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008* this past July. The legislation (H.R. 6331) places an 18 month delay on 10.6% cuts to Medicare Part B reimbursement rates for all health care professionals, including CNMs and NPs. The legislation will also incentivize a move to e-prescribing by providing bonus payments to physicians, CNMs, and NPs who will utilize this new technology in 2009 and 2010.

ACNM and the Government Affairs Committee will introduce new legislation in January and will need to obtain Senate and House co-sponsorship again, but with our successes in the 110th Congress, we are hopeful that our provision will be included in the next Medicare bill which will be addressed at the end of 2009.

ARNPs United Member Shares Her Perspective

By Nancy Chandler, ARNP

I'm a PNP and I represent WA Chapter of NAPNAP (National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners) on the ARNPs United Legislative Committee. I've been an AU member since its early days and in my mind the focus of the group hasn't changed – it is an organization that represents and speaks for NPs in Washington State across all specialties with one voice. For the last 7 or more years I've participated on the Legislative Committee of AUWS, and have been NAPNAP's Legislative Committee chairperson.

I see my role on the ARNPs United Legislative Committee as representing practice issues for PNPs and promoting child health advocacy issues. The committee has been a great arena to discuss issues common to all NPs, and I report back to my PNP colleagues about practice issues that affect other specialties. *Vise versa*, I know I can come to AUWS Legislative Committee with child health policy issues, such as the Cover All Kids by 2010 legislation that passed in 2007, and get support from the Legislative Committee. Each fall, as my state NAPNAP organization writes its Health Policy Agenda and chooses key legislative issues to monitor or promote, the AUWS "bill of the year" is added to our list.

This exchange of support between NP specialties is what I value most from ARNPs United – it is what will keep me renewing my membership every year.

AUWS Election Results

ARNPs United of Washington State just completed an election to add new members to our Board of Directors.

Deonne Brown-Benedict, Ann Darlington, Laura Hahn, Patti Krafft, Nancy Lawton, Catherine Luria and Angie Miller were elected. They will take office in January 2009.

Protect Your Patients from Influenza!

Protecting the health of patients is one of the most important reasons for health care professionals to get an annual influenza vaccination. Flu vaccination helps protect you and your patients against the flu. Getting vaccinated can also prevent the spread of disease to your patients and your family. You can spread influenza to others even when you have no symptoms. So, be sure to get vaccinated to protect others, especially your patients.

Only about 42 percent of health care professionals get a flu vaccination each year. Be a role model and get vaccinated — you can set a positive example for your patients and coworkers!

Here are answers to a couple common questions about flu vaccine that sometimes keep people from getting vaccinated.

Q: Can I get the flu from the flu vaccine?

A: No. It is not possible to get the flu from the vaccine. The flu shot is made from killed viruses that are not able to cause disease. The nasal spray vaccine is made from weakened virus, which is not strong enough to infect people either. Some people may get a mild fever or experience muscle aches for 1-2 days after vaccination.

These are normal reactions that happen when your immune system starts responding to the vaccine.

Q: I do not usually get the flu, so why should I get vaccinated?

A: Everyone is at risk of getting the flu and can benefit from vaccination. You are at risk even if you are healthy, and you can spread the virus to your patients who may be at greater risk of serious illness from the flu. Flu vaccinations are your best protection against the flu, but covering your cough and washing your hands regularly are important too.

For more information about the flu and flu vaccines, visit: www.doh.wa.gov/flunews or www.cdc.gov/flu

**NPs at the Office of the Surgeon General
Address Obesity and Health Communication**

At a time when questions surround the U.S. health care system, two Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation (NPHF) Senior Health Fellows are working to influence U.S. health policy. Mary Beth Bigley, DrPH, MSN, ANP, and Catherine Wisner, PhD, FNP, nurse practitioners (NPs) and recipients of the NPHF's Health Fellowship grants, are completing their second year in the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), helping to provide the best evidence-based science as a reference for public health programs.

"These fellows have demonstrated the importance of bringing the nursing perspective to the forefront of public health discussions," says Acting Surgeon General Steven K. Galson, MD, MPH, a rear admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service.

As the first-ever nurse practitioner fellows in the OSG, Bigley and Wisner have provided leadership in critical areas of public health. "Our holistic view of health care – acknowledging the importance of prevention and social issues in addition to clinical interventions – make us especially effective health care providers," says Wisner.

Preventing childhood obesity is a top priority for the OSG and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Bigley serves as a key leader for the Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future initiative which HHS launched in November 2007 to bring attention to the nearly 34 percent of children and teens in America who are either overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. Bigley also helps coordinate the Surgeon General's HHS interagency council to improve current childhood obesity programs and campaigns, including the design and implementation of the Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Web page and outreach tour.

As part of this program, the Acting Surgeon General is conducting a nationwide outreach tour, recognizing city

officials and local organizations that are taking aggressive action to end childhood obesity. "Overweight children have a higher risk of being overweight adults, and face the possibility of serious and chronic health problems," says Galson. "It's an important public health issue, and prevention is vital."

In addition to addressing specific public health issues like childhood obesity, Bigley and Wisner are focusing on expanding health communication, recognizing it as a challenge and an opportunity to incorporate the nursing point of view.

"The overarching issues affecting public health today are prevention, quality of care and access," says Bigley. "All clinicians and health care systems need to communicate more efficiently and effectively to achieve positive health outcomes and understand the importance and value of health information technology."

In collaboration with the HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, the OSG published proceedings of The Surgeon General's Workshop on Improving Health Literacy. Wisner is working to improve the delivery of care to underserved populations living with HIV/AIDS using principles from the workshop. As a provider at Whitman Walker HIV/AIDS Clinic in northwest Washington, DC, Wisner sees firsthand the challenges of HIV/AIDS treatment when low health literacy is prevalent among patients.

"Improving health literacy will make it more likely that patients understand their conditions and treatment regimens, and can maintain and improve their health status," says Wisner. Using current technology such as electronic health records and Internet tools, Wisner hopes to improve health literacy among providers and patients.

Separately, Bigley developed and executed the 2006 and 2007 marketing and communication plans for the Surgeon General's Family Health History Initiative, a prevention-focused program that encourages family members to learn about health risks based on family history. Bigley finds that her nursing approach enables her to frame issues in the context of health promotion and disease prevention rather than focusing on the illness.

After completing their fellowships this year, Wisner and Bigley plan to work in collaboration with the NPHF to help NPs become proactive about public health issues and more effective in influencing policy on the local, state and federal levels. For the NPHF, this Health Fellowship has created an opportunity for nursing to influence public health policy, and improve health communication and literacy. The NPHF is grateful for the generous support for the Health Fellowship program in the Office of the Surgeon General. The program is provided through grants from AstraZeneca, Takeda Pharmaceu-

ticals of North America, NovoNordisk and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Classified Ads

Tacoma, WA – Family Nurse Practitioner

MultiCare Express, a part of MultiCare Health System, is a retail based practice located in area pharmacies. The express clinic will offer high quality care for simple illnesses such as sore throats, URI, UTI, sinusitis with point of care testing and some common immunizations. This is a great opportunity to practice autonomously in a unique setting. Master of Science degree in nursing and national certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner is required. MultiCare Health System offers competitive compensation/benefits as well as flexible full-time and part-time schedules. For more information please contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #750-908

Gig Harbor, WA - ARNP - Medical Aesthetics

Gig Harbor MultiCare Healthy Reflections Medical and Day Spa is seeking on-call medical aesthetics nurse practitioners to support our client's desires to restore, rejuvenate or enhance their image through education, medical aesthetic procedures and products. This is the ideal position for a provider who wants to set their own work schedule. Candidates must be eligible for licensure & certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please reference opportunity #717-900

Tacoma, WA - ARNP or PA-C

Tacoma Family Medicine (TFM) seeks a full-time nurse practitioner or physician assistant to work in a collaborative practice providing comprehensive primary healthcare in all aspects of family practice. TFM is a fully accredited Family Medicine Residency Program and a proud member of the University of Washington's Family Practice Network. Candidate must be eligible for licensure and certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please reference opportunity #723-889

Western WA - Urgent Care ARNP

Full-time opening for a nurse practitioner to provide quality healthcare to patients of all ages in one of our Urgent CareCenters located within 40 minutes of downtown Seattle. Experience in urgent care and family practice is preferred. Candidates must be qualified for licensure & certification in Washington State as a NP. You will enjoy excellent compensation and benefits, flexible shifts and system-wide support, while practicing your own patient care values. You'll live the Northwest lifestyle and experience the best of Northwest living, from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please refer to opportunity #729-910

Puyallup, WA – Orthopedic ARNP

Good Samaritan Hospital, part of MultiCare Health System, seeks ARNP to join a growing orthopedic and sports medicine group in an office based practice with potential for first assist surgical opportunities. Competitive salary, a full array of benefits and a great location makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experi-

ence the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Refer to opportunity #739-894/895. "MultiCare Health System is a drug free workplace"

Tacoma, WA - ARNP - Adult Medicine

Family Practice/Geriatrician seeks an Adult Nurse Practitioner to work in a collaborative practice providing comprehensive primary healthcare in all aspects of family practice, geriatrics and nursing home care. The provider will work two days in the clinic and two days rounding in the nursing homes. Candidates must be eligible for licensure & certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please reference opportunity #714-881

Tacoma, WA - Full and Part-time Retail Clinic FNP

MultiCare Express, a part of MultiCare Health System, is a retail based practice located in area pharmacies. The express clinic will offer high quality care for simple illnesses such as sore throats, URI, UTI, sinusitis with point of care testing and some common immunizations. This is a great opportunity to practice autonomously in a unique setting. Master of Science degree in nursing and national certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner is required. MultiCare Health System offers competitive compensation/benefits as well as flexible full-time and part-time schedules. For more information please contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please reference opportunity #643-798-800. "MultiCare Health System is a drug free workplace"

Nurse Practitioners - Western WA

Support the mission of Planned Parenthood of Western Washington (PPWW) by joining our talented & dedicated medical team. You may be eligible for a sign on bonus! Seeking Clinician candidates to provide comprehensive reproductive health & family planning services. WA State NP/CNM/PA-C w/prescriptive authority, current certification & CPR card required. FT & PT positions available in the Puget Sound area. Please submit cover ltr/resume to jobs@ppww.org; fax: (206) 328-6818; or Mail: PPWW/HR, 2001 E. Madison, Seattle, WA 98122 www.ppww.org EOE

Part time ARNP w/ Prescriptive Authority – Seattle, WA (Seattle Indian Health Board)

The ARNP functions in the medical clinic receiving referrals from primary care providers, pharmacy and mental health specialists. The ARNP conducts assessments, prescribes any needed psychiatric medications and monitors the patient in follow-up, in collaboration with the PCP and MH Specialist. For more information please call 206-324-9360 ext. 1123 or visit us on the web at www.sihb.org.

Healthy Humor

Bobby was removing some engine valves from a car on the lift when he spotted the famous heart surgeon Dr. DeBakey, who was standing off to the side, waiting for the service manager.

Bobby, somewhat of a loud mouth, shouted across the garage, "Hey DeBakey! Is dat you? Come over here a minute."

The famous surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to where Bobby was working on a car. Bobby in a loud voice, all could hear, said argumentatively, "So Mr. Fancy Doctor, look at this work. I also take out valves, grind 'em, put in new parts, and when I finish this baby will purr like a kitten. So how come you get the big bucks, when you and me are doing basically the same work?"

DeBakery was very embarrassed and as he walked away, said softly

to Bobby, "Try doing your work with the engine running."

Inspirational Quote

The more you say, the less people remember.
~François Fénelon

Meetings

Puget Sound Nurse Practitioner Association

Join us! Puget Sound Nurse Practitioners Association is a non-profit organization supporting ARNPs in Puget Sound since 1998. We meet every other month and offer a social hour/networking and a CME talk. Annual dues are \$35/\$17.50 for students. Apply for membership and find meeting information at <http://PSNPA.org>

Ad Information

Copy deadline is the second Tuesday of the month prior to publication. Ads may be accepted later than this on a space-available basis. Position Available Ads of less than 66 words are \$45, of 66 to 130 words are \$75, and greater than 130 words are \$105. Position Available Ads are priced per insertion. Continuing Education Announcements of less than 65 words are \$70, of 66 to 130 words are \$105, or 131 words or greater are \$130. Continuing Education Announcements are per offering for up to three (3) consecutive insertions. New Product Announcements per product for one insertion of 130 words or less are \$75. Ad Inserts are \$550 for one issue. All ads are subject to space limitations and editing. Call for detailed rate information. Mail copy to ARNP Care, 10024 SE 240th St, #102, Kent, WA 98031. Phone 253.852.9042. Fax 253.852.7725. Email care@nurse.net.

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