

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

Vol. 15, No. 4

Official Newsletter of ARNPs United of Washington State

April 2004

2004 Legislative Report

by Marty Couret & Tamara Warneke

The 2004 legislative session was crazier than usual and we were fortunate to get our L&I bill through in this short, very heated political session. Little was accomplished with medical malpractice issues because of its controversy. There were several good health care bills and all but one died during this session. Below is a breakdown of the more important bills that we were monitoring and the action that was taken on them during the session. Additional information is available at www.nurse.org/wa/au under "Legislative".

Passed in 2004

HB 1691 – Our Labor & Industries bill passed after four years of tough lobbying and political wrangling. We have our Lobbyist Jerry Farley to thank for much of the footwork on this bill. ARNPs and their supporters worked extremely hard lobbying for passage of this bill. All of the phone, email, and letters in support of this bill were effective. It was the grassroots effort from ARNPs and their supporters from all over the state that got this bill passed. (See separate article for additional information.)

HB 2460 – This bill was a bare bones health care insurance for small businesses. The idea is that if insurance coverage is less expensive to small businesses, they will cover more of their employees thus removing them from Medicaid or state assistance. To do this they had to cut many things, mental health was at the top of the list. The danger here is that it lowers the standards for all health care plans by lowering the bar for small businesses. We openly opposed this bill and lobbied against it. We redoubled our efforts when it appeared that ARNPs were to be excluded entirely from the bill with a striking amendment that was added in the Senate. It now appears that ARNPs will be included. However, this is a small consolation since the bill does not require good mental health coverage.

Died in 2004

HB 1828 – As a member of the Mental Health Parity Coalition, we supported this bill that would require that insurance cover mental health services at parity with medical and surgical services.

HB 2399, SB 6272 & HB 2940 – These bills are family medical leave bills, they neglected to include Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners under the title "Health Care Provider." We attempted to have ARNPs added but the bill died before this could be done.

HB 2414 – This bill would have changed the membership of the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission to better reflect the breadth of nursing.

HB 2449 – We actively opposed this "scope of practice bill" which would have made it difficult for us to pursue bills in the future. This appears to be an AMA supported bill designed to contain nurse practitioners and other providers. We anticipate that this bill will return next year.

HB 2711 – This bill would have funded a Center for Nursing by adding a \$5 charge to all nursing licenses. Other agencies tried to route the funding to support other programs. We very nearly had to kill this bill ourselves.

HB 2712 – This bill would have created a task force for nursing work environments to improve patient safety. This bill died before we could do much more than sign in, to support it.

SB 5767 – Allowed out of state NPs to have their prescriptions filled in Washington. This bill was opposed by the Pharmacy Association. Their primary concern is that they believe there is no way to check the prescribing status of nurse practitioners in other states.

SB 6474 & HB 3151 – This bill addressed cost containment measures being taken by Washington State and excluded drugs used to treat mental illness. It would have enabled patients who are well managed on specific psychotropic medications, or who would benefit from these medications, to have access to them. It essentially creates an open formulary for medications used to treat mental illness. ARNPs United supported and testified for this bill.

Liability Insurance – We monitored several bills that aimed to solve the malpractice crisis. The Senate passed SB 5728 which has a non-economic cap of \$350,000 and it was referred to the House Judiciary Committee. This bill wasn't just a medical malpractice bill, it had everything in it but the kitchen sink. Since this bill was getting held up in the House, the Senate leaders stopped all health care bills. This had the effect of killing a lot of good bills that were totally unrelated to malpractice reform. Additional malpractice bills that also died: HB 1926, HB 1927, HB 1928, HB 2485, HB 2786, HB 2816, HB 2834, HB 2839, HB 2879.

The Run Down on Labor & Industries

by Tamara Warneke

SHB 1691 was passed by the House 95-0 and the Senate 44-0 during the 2004 legislative session. This bill authorized advanced registered nurse practitioners to ex-

amine, diagnose, and treat injured workers covered by industrial insurance.

Background: The Department of Health's rules provide that an "advanced registered nurse practitioner" (ARNP) is a registered nurse prepared to assume primary responsibility for management of a broad range of patient care. According to the rules, their practice "incorporates the use of independent judgment as well as collaborative interaction with other health care professionals."

The Department of Labor and Industries' rules permit ARNPs to provide nursing care for injured workers. The rules require that ARNPs be recognized as ARNPs, and have a system of obtaining physician consultations. ARNPs may not sign accident report forms or time loss cards.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The health services available to injured workers include health services provided by advanced registered nurse practitioners within their scope of practice. ARNPs are recognized as independent practitioners. Other provisions give ARNPs the same roles and responsibilities as physicians, except that ARNPs may not conduct special medical examinations. These provisions expire June 30, 2007.

The Department of Labor and Industries must report to the Senate Commerce and Trade Committee and the House Commerce and Labor Committee by December 1, 2006, on the implementation of the act, including the effects of the act on injured worker outcomes, claim costs, and disputed claims.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2004.

New CMS Billing Guide for NPs

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released a billing guide for Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists and Physician Assistants. It can be found at:

<http://rd.bcentral.com/?ID=1585389&s=61627345> or
http://www.medicarenhic.com/providers/billing/nonphygd_mar04.pdf

The new billing guideline was developed by the National Heritage Insurance Company's Education and Outreach Unit and is based on Publication 100-2 Chapter 15 and Publication 100-4 Chapter 12 of the new electronic web based CMS manual system which provides detailed regulations and coverage guidelines of the Medicare Program. The CMS Manual System can be found at www.cms.hhs.gov.

National Leadership Summit

by Marty Couret

Once again Washington State was well represented in the nation's capitol for the National Nurse Practitioner

Summit sponsored by the American College of Nurse Practitioners. Five nurse practitioners from Washington State attended the capitol (Ed Gruber, Fiona Shannon, Phyllis Zimmer, Bob Smithing, and Marty Couret) to debate the present and future of nurse practitioners across the country. This annual meeting of nurse practitioner minds was focused on leadership and networking.

Many topics were hotly debated. The clinical doctorate of nursing was discussed and the need for uniformity in education as well as title. This topic boiled over into a debate of the alphabet soup after our names that has riddled nursing for so many years. Most agreed that NPs need a uniform title across the country. This discussion also fed into the need for a tracking number that follows nurses, and particularly NPs, through the lifetime of their careers a number similar, if not identical, to the UPIN number of physicians. This same group of strong willed and strong-minded NPs pushed, pulled, edited and reworded the public policy agenda for ACNP.

The nurse practitioners from Washington State made several recommendations to ACNP including free membership for students to get them politically involved early in their careers. We requested a State Government Affairs consultant to help with the state specific legislative challenges across the United States. The need to develop uniformity in titling NPs across the country for better public recognition remains to be addressed.

Many states are still fighting for prescription privileges, much less for scheduled medications. Others are struggling to get reimbursed for their services. Georgia highlighted just how powerful state medical associations can be as NPs in Georgia still can not write prescriptions. Texas NPs had to agree not to put forth any bills for three years to get Schedule III prescription privileges this year. Illinois NPs are still challenged by a physician collaborative agreement, and multiple laws that conflict with the NP scope of practice.

It was very empowering and exciting to be surrounded by other impassioned nurse practitioners. There is a sense as you walk around Capital Hill and the monuments that an individual can change make a difference. Members from ARNPs United were able to meet with the health legislative assistants (LA) for Senator Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray. Both of our Washington State Senators are very supportive of nursing. In a meeting with the health LA for Jim McDermot Representative McDermot was invited to join the Nursing Caucus. NPs wanting to be involved in the political process should consider attending the National Nurse Practitioner Summit in 2005.

ARNPs United Partnership with Lexi-Comp

ARNPs United of Washington State working in partnership with Lexi-Comp, Inc. – one of the health care industries most respected publishers – to provide discounted products to our members. As a valued ARNPs United of Washington State member, you will enjoy a 30% discount on Lexi-Comp products and services including their Lexi-Drugs Platinum program for Palm OS and Pocket PC and the award winning Drug Information Handbook for Advanced Practice Nursing.

For 25 years Lexi-Comp has served the medical publishing industry by providing superior content in the following specialty areas: pharmacology, diagnostic procedures and laboratory tests, natural products, dentistry, infectious diseases, and patient education.

Lexi-Comp currently publishes over 30 separate titles, including the very popular *Drug Information Handbook for Advanced Practice Nursing*, *Pediatric Dosage Handbook*, and *Geriatric Dosage Handbook*. Lexi-Comp's Hospital Division assists hundreds of nationally recognized institutions in producing their own high-quality publications. Seven of the top ten hospitals ranked in the *U.S. News and World Reports 2002* annual hospital survey use Lexi-Comp's clinical databases and technology. Over 500,000 clinicians rely on Lexi-Comp every year for critical information on prescribing, administering, and monitoring medications.

Lexi-Comp's electronic offerings continue to expand in many areas. They offer many of their databases for different handheld devices, addressing both Palm OS® and Windows™ Powered Pocket PC platforms. Their online product is one of the most comprehensive databases available, providing time-sensitive clinical information at the point-of-care. They also offer custom formularies for delivery on the handheld devices so institutions can provide their formulary information to their providers. The expertise and clinical experience of their authors, editors, and custom clients, working with the Lexi-Comp team of clinical pharmacists, offer a validated process for creating and updating content.

Lexi-Comp, Inc has made tremendous strides in expanding product offerings over the past few decades. Each of our associates is committed to one common goal: "Continuing to provide the most accurate, up-to-date, concise, and clinically-relevant drug information at the point-of-care."

When you renew your membership you will receive a certificate that can be used through out the year. The discount code printed on it can be used for purchases on line. If you are a member and can't locate your certificate just call or email AUWS and we will let you know what the number is. You can use it for multiple purchase through out the year. For additional infor-

mation you can go to the Lexi-Comp web site at www.lexi.com. You can download the available software for trial before you purchase.

Classified Ads

ARNP/CNMs

This is your opportunity to be rewarded for your hard work, and to make a difference in the lives of the underserved in our community!

Leave the mundane – join a unique women's health practice that affords you as much independence as you and your practice can handle, & even more support for the work you do. Planned Parenthood, the largest and most progressive providers of reproductive health care in the state, is hiring.

We have the following opportunities: Puyallup, Kent, Federal Way & a float position to cover Olympia, Shelton, Centralia, University Place & Puyallup Clinics.

Must have a WA state RN & NP/CNM licensure, prescriptive authority, current certification & CPR card. Prior women's h/c exp. Preferred.

To apply, fax your cover letter/resume to 206.328.6818; email jobs@ppww.org; or mail to PPWW/HR, 2001 E. Madison, Seattle, WA 98122. Toll-free job-line 866.PPWW.JOB. PPWW offers a solid benefit package. www.ppww.org. EOE

Western Washington, Cardiology Opportunity

Physician owned multi-specialty medical clinic located in Bremerton, WA. Currently seeking an experienced full-time Nurse Practitioner in Cardiology. MUST have a minimum of two years cardiology experience. Excellent compensation including incentives and benefit package. Contact: Pam Weiss, PHR. The Doctors Clinic. 2512 Wheaton Way, Bremerton, WA 98310 Phone # 360-782-3604. Fax # 360-782-3689. Email: pweiss@thedoctorsclinic.com

CE Opportunities

11th Occupational Hazards to Health Care Workers Conference

May 18-20, 2004, Vancouver, British Columbia

Over 30 experts will present a series of platform sessions and workshops with up-to-date information on how to protect health care workers in a variety of settings. This dynamic conference will take place in beautiful Vancouver, BC. Sponsors: University of Washington & University of British Columbia.

Topics include: Reducing injuries in health care, Bioaerosols, Considering ergonomics in designing health care facilities, Reducing lifting hazards, Preventing transmission of bloodborne diseases, Emerging threats to health care workers, Violence in health care facilities, NIOSH research and surveillance, An international perspective on health and safety, SARS and health care workers, Ordering and using sharps, Effects of job strain on health workers, Emotional labor at work, and Depression and health care workers.

Speaker list, course details and registration information: (800) 326-7568 or <http://depts.washington.edu/ehce>

Advertising 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, of 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 \$540 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.

Organization Meetings

PSNPA April Meeting

Date: April 21, 2004 at 5:30 pm **Where:** McCormick & Schmick's Harborside Restaurant, 1200 Westlake Av N, Seattle, WA **Registration Fee:** No charge to members. Puget Sound Nurse Practitioner Association meeting and CE on An Overview of Anemia with David Aboulaflia, MD. This event is sponsored by a grant from Ortho Biotech. Space is limited so please RSVP to hogan.p@ghc.org.

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Healthy Humor

Don't Need Health Insurance

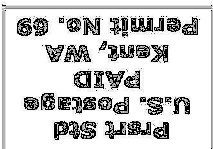
Q: What did the Nurse Practitioner say to the patient who refused to buy health insurance?

A: Alright. Suture self!

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Publisher:
NP Central

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