

# Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

Volume 8, Number 2

Official Newsletter of ARNPs United

February, 1997

## ARNP Care Electronic Edition

With this issue we have changed to a 2 column format to facilitate publication of our electronic edition. You can get a copy at <http://www.nurse.org/wa/arnpcare> or you can subscribe by sending an email message to [majordomo@nurse.net](mailto:majordomo@nurse.net) with a single line message of subscribe arnpcare Electronic editions are published using Adobe Acrobat® and can be read using the free Adobe Acrobat® Reader 3.0 which can be downloaded from: <http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>

## Completion Of Prescriptive Authority

by Tracy Lin, ARNP, Legislative Chair and  
Gail Toraason McGaffick, JD, ARNPs United Lobbyist

We have a bill! Senate Bill 5232, completing prescriptive authority for ARNPs, was introduced in the Senate on January 20 and referred to the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee (SHLTCC) for consideration. It was prime sponsored by Senator Jeannette Wood who was joined by Senators Margarita Prentice, Alex Deccio, Rosa Franklin, Darlene Fairley, Pat Thibaudeau, Jeanne Kohl and Rosemary McAuliffe. We are very fortunate to have a majority of the members of the SHLTCC as bill sponsors. FYI, Senator Deccio is Chair, Senator Wood is Vice-Chair, and Senators Franklin and Fairley are members.

If your legislator is one of the sponsors, please take the time to thank them for their sponsorship of this legislation. If you're not sure who your legislator is, find out by calling the Legislative Hotline at 800.562.6000.

SB 5232 has had have a hearing before the SHLTCC. Now the really challenging work begins. ARNPs United (AU) needs to convince legislators that they should move forward with this legislation in the face of strong pressure from the Washington State Medical Association to do nothing. That's where you come in.

The most powerful advocacy force in politics is a legislator's constituent. That's you! The person who has the ability to vote a legislator in or out of office is listened to. You'd be surprised how few people take advantage of the opportunity to write their legislator and educate them about issues of importance. We know that many of you have been writing letters to your legislators. We thank you! We need you to do more! If you've already written, chances are you've received a letter in return. Don't let the correspondence drop there. Keep up the dialogue by thanking them for their response and offering to be a resource on health care issues in general. Finally, remind your legislators how important passage of this legislation is for consumers.

If you're someone who has not yet connected with your legislator, now is the time. It's our "grassroots power" that will ultimately make the difference in Olympia, so

please do your part today.

After SB 5232 successfully clears the SHLTCC by receiving a majority of votes, it will probably be sent to Ways and Means. That's because the bill has a fiscal impact on state government. One portion of the legislation requires the creation of a temporary advisory committee to the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC). The advisory committee is composed of three ARNPs, one MD and one pharmacist. This group will track the implementation of our legislation and ARNP prescribing patterns. It will automatically terminate three years after it starts, concluding its work by submitting a report to the Legislature. While the cost of the committee will be borne by a temporary surcharge on each ARNP license (estimated to be \$25), and therefore no general fund state dollars are involved, our legislation still is considered to have a fiscal impact. That's why we have an additional hurdle to jump with the Ways and Means Committee.

After our bill clears Ways and Means by receiving a majority vote, it's sent to the Rules Committee. Rules functions as a filter. In reality, it's one more hurdle to jump over. After our bill clears Rules by receiving a majority vote, it's on to the Senate floor where a majority of the 49 member Senate must vote favorably. Then we have to start all over again in the House, and go through the same steps. The only exception is that we don't have to get new sponsors.

The legislative process is a bit like an endurance contest at a track meet. It isn't enough that you persevere through the process, the whole event is timed. This means that bills must have moved beyond certain key points at various times in the session in order to be considered alive. For example, we have until March 5 to clear the SHLTCC and by March 19 we must have successfully moved through the entire Senate.

We hope you're getting the idea that with all these "hurdles" along our path, your involvement as AU members is crucial to our success. You give us the "wings" to lift us easily and quickly over the hurdles. So, if you care about completion of prescriptive authority, please do your part. And again, thanks to those of you that have been making contacts with your legislators. It makes a big difference!

## Legislative Update

by Tracy Lin, ARNP, Legislative Chair and  
Gail Toraason McGaffick, JD, ARNPs United Lobbyist

In addition to completion of ARNP prescriptive authority, ARNPs United, through its Legislative Committee, is monitoring a wide variety of other pieces of legislation. Recently, we testified in favor of legislation which would limit disclosure of complaints filed with the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC)

to only those which warranted an investigation. Currently, any complaint filed against an ARNP may be disclosed to any person calling the NCQAC, as soon as its filed. This is extremely unfair to providers, in our opinion, because there has been no assessment that the complaint warrants an investigation. In general, the provider community is very angry about complaint disclosure policies of the Department of Health because managed care companies and employers are using any reports of complaints, whether substantiated or not, to deny employment or access to managed care panels.

While passage of this bill would seem to make sense, it is strongly opposed by the newspaper lobby who asserts that if legislators pass this legislation they will be protecting providers, not consumers. At the hearing, legislators talked about the fact that the current way complaints are handled negates our basic Constitutional right that a person is presumed innocent.

Another option would be to have standards for provider credentialing that set some parameters about how this complaint information could be used. Related to this there's a group of bills that are expected to be introduced by Washington Citizen's Action (WCA), a consumer based organization. WCA is introducing legislation that would establish standards for provider credentialing based on objective standards of quality. In addition, providers would have the right to be notified and receive a hearing if they were denied managed care plan credentials. It would also prohibit termination of providers "without cause." Other parts of the WCA legislation include requirements for insurers to disclose "excessive administrative costs", prohibitions against financial incentives to deny care, and grievance and appeals procedures.

In reality, this legislation will probably not pass this year because the insurer and employer community will oppose it. However, its introduction is very significant. This marks the first time that a consumer based organization has come forward and asked for the establishment of some "rules" of the game, so to speak. We

will provide the bill number(s) for this legislation in our next update and will encourage AU members to give us feedback. Even if this legislation doesn't pass this year, we predict it will be back.

Other issues of interest to ARNPs include legislation to abolish Wickline clauses. House Bill 1167 would make

health carriers legally responsible for decisions they make to provide, limit or deny care to consumers. This is a very important bill for providers and I would encourage you to get a copy and review it. We believe that after being discussed for several years this legislation may finally pass.

We're also following a whole group of bills that require providers to notify parents prior to minors being able to receive a whole variety of health services. Legislation includes HB 1034, SB 5082 and SB 5166.

Legislation is expected to be introduced which would abolish the corporate practice of medicine doctrine, which would allow ARNPs to incorporate in professional service corporations or just about any other legal entity, with physicians. This is really a very profound change because it will allow providers to incorporate with investors who are not health care providers.

Removing certificate of need for ambulatory surgery centers and hospitals is also expected to occur this session. In addition, WSNA will be introducing their clinical sovereignty legislation. We'll include more specific information about both bills next time.

If you have questions, or legislative issues you believe AU should be tracking, please contact Tracy Lin at 206.759.9640 or E-mail: [tlin@wolfenet.com](mailto:tlin@wolfenet.com)

Copies of bills may be obtained via the Internet at <http://www.leg.wa.gov> or by calling the Legislative Bill Room at 360.786.7573.

### Wanted By-Laws People!

Needed ~ people who enjoy working with Bylaws! ARNPs United Bylaws were updated and approved in October 1996. Bylaws Committee Chairperson, Hazel Fleck, would like help for future changes. Please contact her at 1960 Whitman, Walla Walla, WA 99362 or E-mail: [fleckhc@whitman.edu](mailto:fleckhc@whitman.edu)

### Any Category of Providers

by Ron Young, ARNP

This is an update on the last meeting of "any category of providers." The Office of Insurance Commissioner (OIC), insurance companies, providers, consultants and patient advocates met and negotiated. The OIC will be writing up a draft proposal that will act as a guideline for further discussions for settlement.

The insurance companies were not very excited about raising the patient co-pay to help offset their costs for all categories of providers. There was a general agreement that each group of non-physician providers will provide a list of ICD-9 codes they use. The list should be a limited list of 5 to 15+ of the most commonly used diagnostic codes. This list would then be considered in the negotiations for inclusion in the "any category of provider" settlement.

I spoke with the Office of Insurance Commissioner and was reassured that advanced practice nurses would **not**

#### ARNP Care

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have their current list of diagnostics codes reduced. The OIC wants to increase the amount of reimbursable codes, not limit them.

### Prescriptive Authority Completion To-Do List

by Sally Plumly

As someone involved in efforts to coordinate grassroots support for the completion of prescriptive authority for ARNPs, I have been humbled, impressed and proud of the ARNPs of various specialties that I've had communication with. Articulate on the merits, needs and complexity of this issue, many have donated time, expertise, money and energy, but not enough. Many of us have been overwhelmed with work, family, holidays and storms and are not particularly familiar or comfortable with the legislative arena and/or eliciting letters of support. Yet, **if we don't all mobilize, we have no chance of achieving this.** If you haven't yet mobilized, here are ways to do it : 1) Contact your legislators. Follow the guidelines provided in the December '96 issue of *ARNP Care*. As the legislature is in session you will either need to communicate by phone or preferably meet in Olympia. Remember to send the results to our Lobbyist using the Legislative Contact Sheet. 2) Elicit letters of support from clients, administrators, pharmacists, colleges and physicians utilizing provided guidelines and sample letters. Ask supportive physicians to come out in their professional organizations. Forward a copy of letters to me so we can track and use most expediently. 3) Contact WSNA by writing to Judi Lyons at 2502 2nd Ave, #500, Seattle, WA 98121. Ask that WSNA make this issue one of priority support. If you need assistance or more details, contact me via E-mail: au-leg@nurse.org or phone: 206.884.4158. **Please act now!** We need your help to make it happen.

### Classified Ads

#### ARNP for OB/GYN Office

Highline Medical Group in Burien, WA seeks a part-time and/or full time ARNP for a busy two-physician OB/GYN office. Looking for immediate placement. Prefer ARNP with OB/GYN experience. Please submit CV to Highline Medical Group, Attn: Paula, 16110 - 8th Ave SW, Bldg A, Burien, WA 98166. Fax: 206.242.8302.

#### Women's Health NP

Washington State University Health and Wellness Services is seeking an ARNP/PA-C with a minimum of two years women's health care clinical experience for a temporary replacement in Women's Clinic to cover a leave of absence. This is an 80 to 100%, nine month position from 8/16/97 to 5/15/98, daytime hours, no weekends, no call. Requirements: current Washington State license to practice as a Physician Assistant or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner with Prescriptive Authority and National Certification. The salary is competitive. Send CV, cover letter and three letters of reference to Dr. Margaret Merri-field, Health and Wellness Services, Washington State University, PO Box 642302, Pullman, WA 99164-2302 or contact Jill Thompson at 509.335.6728 (voice mail).

#### Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound is currently seeking a part or full-time pediatric nurse practitioner. Position would be located at Lynnwood Medical Center working with pediatrician. Group Health Cooperative is a consumer-governed managed care organization which

emphasizes consumer involvement, education and preventive care. For further information, call 206.448.6543 or write to: Medical Staffing Services, 521 Wall Street, Seattle, WA 98121. Toll-free number: 800.543.9323. Fax: 206.448.6191.

### Continuing Education

#### Clinical Pharmacology Series 1997

This series of six one-day courses (8 contact hours each session) is designed as a pharmacology update for nurse practitioners working in a variety of specialties. The dates and courses are:

- ◆ Neonatal Drug Therapy, 02/13/97
- ◆ Pediatric Drug Therapy, 03/19/97
- ◆ Geriatric Drug Therapy, 04/16/97
- ◆ Adult Drug Therapy, 05/08/97
- ◆ Women's Health Drug Therapy, 05/22/97
- ◆ Neuropsychotropic Drug Therapy 06/13/97

Location: Hyatt Regency, Bellevue, WA for the Neonatal Drug Therapy (02/13/97) course only, all other courses will be held at the Shoreline Conference Center, Seattle, WA. Contact Continuing Nursing Education, University of Washington, PO Box 357260, Seattle, WA 98195, phone: 206.543.1047.

#### Pharmacology Series

- ◆ February 19: A Practical Approach to Understanding Cardiac Drugs
- ◆ February 26: New Drug Therapies in the Treatment of AIDS
- ◆ March 5: Pharmacologic Management of Pain: Analgesics
- ◆ March 12: Update on Antibiotics

Wednesdays, February 19 & 26, March 5 & 12, 1997. Location: St Martin's College, Lacey, WA. Time: 7-9:30 pm. Fee: \$90 for 4 sessions or \$25 per session. 2 CE hours per session, 8 CE hrs for series. To register, contact the St Martin's College Dept of Nursing at 360.438.4376.

#### Clinical Delegation: The Art and the Science

April 4, 1997. Location: St Martin's College, Lacey, WA. Time: 8 am - 5 pm. Fee: \$85 which includes lunch. 7.5 CE hours. This conference will focus on building and strengthening skills for clinical delegation. Significant time will be spent assisting individuals in assessing, monitoring and evaluating the caregivers performing the delegated tasks. Topics include: The law, nurse delegation & expanded nurse delegation (ESSHB 1908), risks and liabilities associated with delegation, relationship building, developing trust, effective communication, giving and receiving feedback - developing and coaching others, accountability, and practice delegation sessions. To register, contact the St Martin's College Department of Nursing at 360.438.4376.

#### Basic Colposcopy

February 26-28, 1997. Location: Seattle, WA. 20.5 hours (P) and 25.2 contact hrs (pharm hrs available). CME Solutions, LLC for information or to register, contact Karen Taylor, 206.865.9005, fax: 206.865.0616.

#### Clinical Aromatherapy: Introduction for Health Professionals

March 22-23, 1997. Location: Bothell, WA. This program is designed for nurses, naturopaths, massage therapists, and other health professionals interested in the therapeutic benefits of clinical aromatherapy. Presented by Jane Buckle, founder of Aromatherapy Health Professionals, an education organization for clinical aromatherapy. This program will cover: Historical & current use worldwide; Proper identification of essential oils; Importance of the extraction methods; Clinical applications of essential oils; Safety & storage of essential oils; Case examples for clinical aromatherapy; and The 'm technique' for hands, feet, face, and neck. Bastyr University's continuing education programs are designed to meet the growing demand by health care professionals for high quality, science-based information on topics related to natural medicine. Registration fee is \$150. For more information, contact Bastyr University Continuing Education at 206.602.3152.

#### Suturing and Laceration Management Workshop

March 28-29, 1997 at Bellevue Community College Upper Campus, Bellevue, WA. This workshop enables the clinician to assess and manage wounds as presented in the office or clinic. Fee \$160. Call Bellevue Community College CNE at 206.641.2012 for more information.

#### Vulvar & Vaginal Lesion ID & Biopsy Course/IUD Insertion

April 10, 1997. Location: Seattle, WA. 4.0 hours (P) and 4.8 contact hours and IUD insertion 4.0 hrs (P) and 4.8 contact hours (pharm hrs available). Each course 1/2 day. CME Solutions, LLC for information or

to register, contact Karen Taylor, 206.865.9005, fax: 206.865.0616.

#### **Endometrial Biopsy**

April 11, 1997. Location: Seattle, WA. 8.0 hours (P) and 9.8 contact hours (pharm hours available). CME Solutions, LLC for information or to register, contact Karen Taylor, 206.865.9005, fax: 206.865.0616.

#### **Gynecology Review**

June 5-6, 1997. Location: Seattle, WA. 14.5 hours (P) and 14.8 contact hours (pharm hours available). CME Solutions, LLC for information or to register, contact Karen Taylor, 206.865.9005, fax: 206.865.0616.

#### **Reproductive Health '97**

November 13-16, 1997. Hyatt Regency Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ. This meeting will be held in conjunction with Planned Parenthood Federation of America and cosponsored by the National Assoc of Nurse Practitioners in Reproductive Health. Lecture style sessions focus on recent advances in cancer prevention & detection, changes in diagnosis of STDs, issues surrounding primary care, new developments in medical abortion & contraception & other issues related to reproductive health. For more information, contact Amy McCormick at 202.466.3825.

#### **Adolescent Reproductive Health '97**

November 21-23, 1997. Location: Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, McLean, VA. Lecture style sessions focus on the health care needs of teens, adolescent health care challenges, adolescent sexuality, long-acting contraceptives, teens and media, and teens and AIDS. For more information, contact Amy McCormick at 202.466.3825.

#### **Graduate and Post Graduate Options at Seattle Pacific Univ**

1. Master's of Science in Nursing, Advanced Clinical Practice, 2. MSN including NP pathways (Adult/Gerontology & Family), 3. Post Master's NP certification courses, 4. FNP Modules for ARNPs - Master prepared. Earn your Master's of Science in Nursing degree at Seattle Pacific University in our evening and weekend program. The newly designed MSN/NP curriculum has condensed to 59 quarter credits

totally. In seven quarters, evenings and weekends, you can obtain the MSN/NP degree. Part-time students also have reduced credit requirements and flexible patterns for completion. The MSN-Advanced Clinical Practice Program (45 quarter credits) is a full (one year) or part-time (two year) sequence of courses 1-2 nights a week and 3 Saturdays per quarter. Flexible packaging of courses and individual tailoring of your MSN degree are only a few of the benefits of SPU's Master's of Science in Nursing. For more information, and individualized responses, visit our web site at: <http://paul.spu.edu/healthsciences/msn.html>; call 206.281.2888 or 800.899.1769, write 3307 Third Ave West, Seattle, WA 98119 or E-mail us at: [msninfo@spu.edu](mailto:msninfo@spu.edu)

#### **Home Study Courses**

Nurses and Allied Healthcare Professionals - Earn your CE credits at home with National Center of Continuing Education - the leader in home study courses since 1977. We offer two free courses with your order of 24 or more contact hours or one free course with your order of 12 or more contact hours! Visit our website at: [www.nursece.com](http://www.nursece.com). We are officially accredited by all State Boards of Nursing and the American Nurses' Association Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. NPs, Nurses and PAs may take any of their 60 mandatory contact hours through the Center. Contact National Center of Continuing Education, Inc., PO Box 1407, Roseville, CA 95678, phone: 800.824.1254, fax: 916.786.4603 or E-mail: [NCCE@worldnet.att.net](mailto:NCCE@worldnet.att.net)

#### **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 & Continuing Education Announcements 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 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*, 212 Railroad Ave N, Kent, WA 98032. Phone 206.852.9042. Fax 206.480.0002. E-mail [care@nurse.net](mailto:care@nurse.net)

## **Please Join Us**

You may believe that because this newsletter arrives every month you are a member of ARNPs United. That is wrong. Since 1989 *ARNP Care* has been sent to every ARNP in Washington regardless of membership status. This is in imminent danger of stopping due to a lack of funds. Remember the number of members is what makes an organization strong and credible with the legislature and others. So join us today. Individual memberships are \$150 per year. Lifetime memberships are \$1000. Student currently enrolled in a ARNP program may join for \$50 per year. Make your check out to ARNPs United and mail it to: ARNPs United, 212 Railroad Ave N, Kent WA 98032.

## **We Regret To Inform You That You Are NOT An ARNPs United Member**

## **Member Thank You!**

**Thank you** for being one of the ARNPs in this state who have joined ARNPs United. Without your support it would not have been possible to have hired a lobbyist and had such a successful legislative session in 1995. It is also clear that without your support the organization would not have been capable of moving forward in developing a solid framework to build on the grassroots efforts of the ARNPs in this state. ARNPs who are not members of ARNPs United have received *ARNP Care* printed on lavender paper to let them know they are not members.

# **ARNPs United Member Edition**

## **Completion Of Prescriptive Authority For Washington State Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners**

**Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs) have been legally and safely prescribing legend drugs and Schedule V controlled substances within their specialties for 17 years in Washington State.** The benefit to the consumer is evidenced by: (1) increased demand for ARNP services, particularly in areas that are underserved by physicians; (2) high levels of patient satisfaction with ARNP services; and (3) minimal complaints about ARNP prescribers before the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and Board of Pharmacy. The time has come to complete ARNPs' prescriptive authority by including Schedules II-IV in the list of controlled substances for which they can prescribe.

**ARNPs Help Ensure Consumer Access to Health Care.** Historically and today, ARNPs work in rural and urban settings throughout the State. Their wide availability makes it possible for consumers to have access to necessary care. They provide services to children, families, adults, elders, and provide such services as primary and mental health care. ARNPs practice independently, but consult with and refer to physicians and other providers when appropriate.

**ARNPs Are Qualified to Prescribe Controlled Substances.** ARNPs are highly qualified to prescribe all levels of controlled substances within their specialties. They have proven this expertise through their stringent credentialing process, and they maintain their competence through continuing education requirements, some of the most rigorous in the nation. Ironically, Schedule V controlled substances contains some drugs which have greater side effects or are more expensive than those contained in Schedules II-IV. Also, the list of drugs that comprise Schedules II through V change far less frequently than legend drugs, a category ARNPs are allowed to prescribe without limitation.

**The System is Broken.** The limitation on ARNP prescriptive practice has resulted in an outdated, cumbersome and fragmented system of health care delivery that benefits no one. In an attempt to avoid potential harm to a patient if medication is delayed and to allow health care systems to operate cost effectively, the following practices have developed:

- (1) Physicians presigning prescription pads for use by ARNPs
- (2) Physicians countersigning ARNP drug orders in health care facilities long after the medication has been administered
- (3) Physicians telephoning orders to pharmacists at the request and specification of an ARNP
- (4) Physicians writing standing orders for controlled substances

**Clearly ARNPs, in practice, do make decisions about their patient's medication management.** However, the procedures that are necessary to allow this to happen point to a dysfunctional system that is cumbersome for both ARNPs and physicians, and underscores the necessity for changing current state law.

**Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) Ruling.** After years of confusion among ARNPs and physicians, the NCQAC has stated that it is not legal for ARNPs to use presigned prescription pads. Unfortunately, this commonly used practice has become a major way for patients of ARNPs to receive certain medications in a timely manner. This ruling by the NCQAC has the potential for seriously compromising the ability of ARNPs to deliver appropriate care to their patients. At a minimum it will require unnecessary duplication of services. ARNP patients will need to make a separate appointment with a physician to obtain certain prescriptions, thus incurring additional expense. Further, a delay in administering or obtaining necessary medications may result in a visit to a hospital emergency room, once again an additional expense for the patient and the system.

**Cost Effectiveness and Accountability.** Granting completion of prescriptive authority for ARNPs will be cost effective. It will eliminate the need for unnecessary duplication of services and will assure timely and appropriate care for ARNP patients. Completion of prescriptive authority will appropriately place accountability and legal responsibility with the ARNP for the medication decisions they are currently making. Also, it will eliminate the potential vicarious liability for the physician in the current system.

**The NCQAC, with the advice of the proposed advisory committee composed of representatives of advanced practice nursing, pharmacy, and medicine, will monitor the implementation of this legislation.** They will report their findings to the Legislature by January, 2000.

**Nineteen other states allow nurse practitioners to prescribe Schedules II-V controlled substances.** Patients, providers, third party payers, HMOs, clinics, and the general public will all benefit from this change in Washington State law.

For more information please contact any of the following:

- ◆ Gail McGaffick: 360.754.7266 or 360.754.3290 ARNPs United
- ◆ Sharon Case: 206.943.5489 or 206.754.3290 Association of Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners
- ◆ Lisa Thatcher: 206.754.3290 Washington State Nurses Association