The Cost Effectiveness of Nurse Practitioner Care

For over 30-years nurse practitioners have provided high-quality, cost-effective care. It was evident back in 1981 when the Office of Technology Assessment determined that nurse practitioners perform comparable medical care tasks at a lower total cost than physicians, and it is still true today:

- In 2009 it was determined that nurse practitioners provide care of equivalent quality to physicians at a lower cost, while achieving high levels of patient satisfaction and providing more disease prevention counseling, health education, and health promotion activities than physicians.

- In 2009, the national average cost of a NP visit was 20% less than a visit to a physician.

- After insurance reform in Massachusetts, the state realized they could gain a cost savings of $4.2 to $8.4 billion over a 10-year period from increased use of nurse practitioners.

- In 2008, treatment provided by nurse practitioners in retail clinics cost less than treatment in physician offices or urgent care centers with no apparent adverse effect on quality or delivery of care.

- In 2004, primary care practices that used more nurse practitioners in care delivery realized lower practitioner labor costs per visit than practices that used less.

- In 2008, a worksite clinic run by a single nurse practitioner resulted in direct medical care cost-savings of nearly $2.18 million over a two-year period, without including indirect savings related to lost productivity and absences.

- Clinics run by nurse practitioners create cost savings associated with reduced use of emergency rooms, urgent care centers, hospitals, and emergency medical services.

- Nurse-managed clinic patients have higher rates of generic medication fills at pharmacies, and lower rates of hospitalizations when compared to patients of similar providers.

No matter what setting, nurse practitioner care has proven to be a high-quality, cost-effective means of primary care delivery.

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About the National Nursing Centers Consortium - The National Nursing Centers Consortium (www.nncc.us) is the largest organization of nurse-managed health clinics in the United States. NNCC works to advance nurse-led health care through policy, consultation, programs and applied research to reduce health disparities and meet people’s primary care and wellness needs.


