

## Carnahan Group Special Topics Review

### Your Nurse Practitioner Will See You Now

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#### Background: Traditional Model

Primary care is traditionally delivered via a physician-led approach. The primary care physician coordinates care with nurse practitioners, other physicians, and support staff throughout the patient's life. However, the traditional care delivery model is being disrupted by more and more primary care nurse practitioners seeing their patients and developing their own practices. There are two main factors causing a drive towards the advanced practice provider being the terminus of care instead of the physician: 1) A deficit of primary care physicians, and 2) An aging population.

#### The Deficit of Primary Care Physicians

America has a primary care physician shortage. The American Association of Medical Colleges ("AAMC") estimates a shortage of 17,800 – 48,000 primary care physicians by 2034.<sup>1</sup> The deficit for primary care physicians can largely be summarized by the following trends<sup>2</sup>:

- Increasing costs of undergraduate and professional schools
- Lower salaries/compensation compared to other specialty/surgical counterparts.
- Job dissatisfaction/burnout

#### An Aging Population

By 2034 the United States is expected to increase its population size by 10.6%. Furthermore, there is an expected 42.4% increase in people 65 or older – the exact demographic that requires more coordinated primary care. Compounding the population challenges is that 2 out of 5 physicians will be 65 or older.<sup>3</sup>

These challenges have created a new avenue for the Advanced Practice Provider ("APP"). Increasingly, APPs staff retail clinics such those found at Walgreens or local urgent care centers. Nurse Practitioners have autonomy in almost all aspects of their practice from prescriptions to scheduling. Some states do not even require physician supervision of the APP.<sup>4</sup>

As patients look for quicker, on-demand access to primary care, APPs will continue to expand their roles and establish community access. The demand for nurse practitioners isn't going away either as the Bureau of Labor Statistics ("BLS") projects a 10-year ('21 – '31) growth outlook for nurse practitioners at 40%.<sup>5</sup>

As the population ages and the physician deficit grows, more and more patients will be seen by APPs for their primary care visits.

Please contact the Carnahan Group for additional information or a focused analysis of a particular arrangement.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.medicaleconomics.com/view/are-primary-care-physicians-being-replaced->

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/why-is-it-so-challenging-to-find-a-primary-care-physician-202209282822#:~:text=Primary%20care%20is%20getting%20hit,PCPs%20were%20up%20to%2079%25.>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.medicaleconomics.com/view/are-primary-care-physicians-being-replaced->

<sup>4</sup> <https://online.maryville.edu/nursing-degrees/np/resources/states-granting-np-full-practice-authority/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/nurse-anesthetists-nurse-midwives-and-nurse-practitioners.htm>