

National Nurse Practitioner Associations Decry Department of Education Final Rule As a Malicious Attack On Nursing

In response to the Department of Education's final rule establishing federal loan limits for graduate and professional students, the nation's national leading nurse practitioner organizations are deeply troubled by the Department's attack on the NP profession by excluding NP programs from the professional degree definition. This rule is a culmination of a deeply flawed analysis by the Department, and it will harm the future of the entire nursing workforce.

Despite the fact that the Department acknowledges that nurse practitioners are a fundamentally distinct profession, and post-baccalaureate nursing degrees meet the definition provided by Congress, the Department declined to recognize post baccalaureate nursing degrees as professional degrees. In doing so, the department establishes contextual requirements which are far outside the scope of the legislative intent and statutory authority and relies on fundamental factual inaccuracies about NP practice and education to justify its exclusion.

Further, this final rule ignores the overwhelming evidence-based support for the addition of post-baccalaureate nursing. This is from thousands of individuals, professional organizations, health systems and other stakeholders, and the over one-hundred and fifty bipartisan members of the United States Congress who called on the Department to include post baccalaureate nursing as a professional degree program.

We appreciate the widespread support of the nurse practitioner profession throughout the rulemaking process and commend the thousands of NPs who made their voices heard. We are grateful for the strong bipartisan Congressional support, and look forward to continuing our efforts to right this wrong.

American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association

National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties