

Hello Ms. Tamkin

We noted with great interest the article, *Nurse Practitioners step in as geriatrician ranks shrink (Jariel Arvin)*, on June 15, 2025 which highlights the growing crisis in geriatric care. However, the article misses a critical distinction between foundational competence and verified expertise, inadvertently painting an overly optimistic picture of the capacity of the nurse practitioner (NP) workforce to fill the current and future gap in primary care needs of older adults in the U.S. We appreciate you bringing forward the lack of providers specializing in the care of older adults and wanted to provide a few bullets for clarity.

Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) care for older adults across almost all health care settings, yet few have the recognized specific proficiencies to care for older adults. Internists and family nurse practitioners, such as Stephanie Johnson (the NP featured in the article), are trained with basic skills to care for older adults, geriatricians, gerontological nurse practitioners, and gerontological specialists have additional education and validated credentials to care for complex health care needs that arise with aging. The assertion that NPs “specializing in geriatrics has more than tripled since 2010” is misleading. This statistic reflects the growth of Adult-Gerontology Primary Care NPs (AGPCNPs), who practice primary care of adults across the adult lifespan. It does not reflect a growth in NPs with verified *specialization* in gerontology. In reality, the ranks of NP geriatric “specialists” are shrinking. There are three organizations that certify NPs as geriatric specialists and the 2024 numbers they report are alarming:

Certifying body	Number of Geriatric Certified NPs (2024)	Comments
American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)	2,312	This body retired its certifying exam in 2012, so all current GNPs with this credential can only renew their certifications every 5 years using continuing education credits.
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)	153	
Gerontological Nurses Certification Commission (GNCC)	228	This certifying body offered an exam for the first time in 2018 and was established to create another option for

Email sent to Theresa Tamkins, Health Editor of the Washington Post, on June 26, 2025 in response to published article by Jariel Arvin, June 15, 2025

		NPs to certify as geriatric specialists.
--	--	------------------------------------------

The article's statement that 15% of NPs are "certified to treat older adults" is unclear. There are approximately 2,700 (<1%) NPs who hold a true specialist credential (GNP or GS-C). Conflating this group creates a dangerous illusion that the workforce crisis is resolved. While NPs provide vital services, caring for our most complex and frail older adults requires demonstrated expertise. It is important to use precise language in educating the public regarding the differences in provider knowledge skills and abilities as they seek expert geriatric care.

I would be pleased to discuss this further at your convenience and can be reached at suemullaney615@gmail.com or 781-330-9841.

Thank you for your time.

Susan Mullaney, DNP, CNP, GNP-BC, GS-C, FAAN, FAANP

Marianne Shaughnessy, PhD, AGPCNP-BC, GS-C, FAAN

American Association of Nurse Practitioners Certifying Board Annual Report 2024.

<https://www.aanpcert.org/resource/documents/annual/2024%20AANPCB%20Annual%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

American Geriatrics Society. (2024). Geriatrics Workforce by the Numbers.

American Nurses Credentialing Center 2024 ANCC Certification Data.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/globalassets/docs/ancc/ancc-cert-data-website.pdf>

Arvin, J. (2025, June 15). *Nurse practitioners step in as geriatrician ranks shrink*. The Washington Post.

Gerontology Nursing Certification Commission. (n.d.). *GS-C Certification Guidelines*.

<https://www.aanp.org/about/all-about-nps/np-fact-sheet>
<https://www.americangeriatrics.org/geriatrics-profession/about-geriatrics/geriatrics-workforce-numbers>

National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2008). *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education*.

Email sent to Theresa Tamkins, Health Editor of the Washington Post, on June 26, 2025 in response to published article by Jariepl Arvin, June 15, 2025

Xue, Y., Lin, Q., & Poghosyan, L. (2024). Supply and Geographic Distribution of Geriatric Physicians and Geriatric Nurse Practitioners. *JAMA Network Open*, 7(11), e2444659.

Email sent to Theresa Tamkins, Health Editor of the Washington Post, on June 26, 2025 in response to published article by Jariepl Arvin, June 15, 2025