

Memorandum of Opposition – S4784 (Rivera)/A7174 (Paulin)

ANA-New York, on behalf of its members and their patients, opposes S4784 (Rivera)/A7174 (Paulin) to amend the public health law, in relation to community paramedicine services provided by emergency medical providers.

American Nurses Association - New York (ANA-NY) is a professional nursing organization representing the interests of New York State's 360,000 registered nurses. ANA-NY advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing care, supporting the professional and educational advancement of nurses, and promoting the welfare of nurses to the end that all people may have better health care.

This legislation proposes to expand the duties of EMS paramedics and reimburse them for providing services. However, as drafted, it appears that this legislation would allow non-nurses to provide nursing services to patients in their homes. The intent to expand access to care and reduce preventable readmissions to hospitals is a laudable goal, but this legislation, which doesn't clearly define "paramedicine" and keeps in-home supervision under medical doctors, will lead to a confusing mix of care that could result in erosion of coordinated home care nursing services. Currently, for care in a home setting, a nurse is the coordinator of the care not a medical doctor.

The clearly defined scope of nursing practice (Article 139 of the Education Law: Nurse Practice Act) is substantively different from the first responder duties that paramedics perform under the supervision of physicians. Under the current system, EMTs are providing acute, emergent care and not chronic care, which is the care traditionally provided in a home setting. If EMT's are going to be working in the home setting, ANA-NY feels that there should be coordination with a nurse, or a health care provider with chronic care experience. The current legislative language does not reconcile these two roles, which will potentially lead to paramedics practicing nursing without a license.

All professional nursing organizations should participate as stakeholders to craft language that protects the safety of patients yet provides a well-defined role for paramedics as members of the health care team to contribute in providing care in underserved areas. Specific definitions for the type of care, required training, appropriate supervision, and evaluation of care are important protections for patients and families.

For these reasons, ANA-NY opposes S4784 (Rivera)/A7174 (Paulin) to amend the public health law, in relation to community paramedicine services provided by emergency medical providers.