

Iowa PA Society 2021 Legislation

515-282-8192
info@iapasociety.org
www.iapasociety.org

PA Harmonization Bill

Last year, the legislature passed S.F. 2357, which made several positive changes to PA (physician assistant) practice in Iowa and gave PAs greater flexibility to practice in rural and underserved areas. However, there remain statutory and regulatory provisions which must be updated to include PAs. These changes are not scope increases; rather, they reflect updates to federal and state laws or areas of health care where PAs were already authorized to practice but not specified alongside other health care practitioners. In many of the provisions to be amended by this *Harmonization Bill*, PAs were already included in some areas of code related to a certain type of care or patient population but were not consistently enumerated. These omissions result in confusion and delays for patients treated by PAs.

The *Harmonization Bill* would solve this problem by specifically adding PAs to areas of code that are consistent with PA education, training, and experience. These amendments are especially important for rural PAs and their patients – **45% of PAs in Iowa practice in rural settings and specifically authorizing PAs to provide the services they are already qualified to deliver would increase access to care in these areas.** Our *Harmonization Bill* was drafted in cooperation with the [Iowa Medical Society](#) and the [Iowa Psychiatric Society](#).

Significant changes in this Harmonization Bill include:



Updating provisions related to hospice to reflect recent federal action to include PAs in the definition of "attending physician" and ensuring PAs can provide care within hospice settings;



Fully enumerating PAs in laws and regulations related to end-of-life decisions. PAs are already included in the definition of "health care provider" for these purposes;



Ensuring PAs meeting the education, experience, and supervision requirements under the existing definition of "mental health professionals" may provide mental health services that are limited to such professionals, including filing for a patient's voluntary admission to psychiatric hospitals and conducting admission exams;



Including PAs among other, similarly situated practitioners for the purposes of treating patients within the adult and juvenile justice systems;



Authorizing PAs to perform routine qualification examinations for childcare providers, school bus drivers, recipients of state benefits, patients requiring certain treatments or devices (e.g., prosthetics, diabetes equipment, or special diets) and certain athletes; and



Ensuring PAs are represented on panels and programs related to public health, including the Domestic Abuse Death Review Team and the HIV partner notification program.