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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

November 24, 2008

Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing
Ann Steffanic, Board Administrator
P.O. Box 2649
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

Dear Ms. Steffanic,

I am writing in reference to 16A-5124: CRNP General Revisions. I am currently practicing as a nurse practitioner with a Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery service. I am responsible for the hospital discharge plan & implementation for patients who have had surgery here at DuBois Regional Medical Center. One of the proposed changes in particular would be of great benefit to the patients that I care for post-operatively. I am referring to my inability to prescribe more than a 72 hour supply of schedule II & III medications. When these patients are discharged, they only leave the hospital with a 72 hour supply of pain medication because that is all that I am allowed to provide for them. Many of these patients have very painful chest incisions, and need to call the office a couple of days after discharge for a refill. This puts an added burden on the family member or caregiver as they now have to go to the pharmacy (again) and perhaps pay another copay. I would like to be able to prescribe the amount of pain medication that I believe is needed for patients in my care. I hate to see the family burdened with this additional demand on them, and I really hate to hear that the patient ran out of medication when the office or pharmacy is closed. I recently discharged a patient post-thoracotomy. He went home on a Friday, and he ran out of pain medication Sunday night. He was unable to get in touch with our office until Monday morning (even though we do have an answering service), and then his wife had to go out to the pharmacy. He had a miserable night and morning, and in fact took him until mid-day Tuesday before he was comfortable again.

I would appreciate your support of these proposed changes as it will improve health care for Pennsylvanians who are under the care of a nurse practitioner. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, I can be reached at 814-375-7724.

Sincerely,

Diana Bertram CRNP

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