

SB 345

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS SB 345 AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

Senate Bill 345 would ensure that North Carolina remains the best place to practice as a PA.

Optimal Team Practice, or OTP for short, will keep PAs accountable for the care they provide and will keep team-based collaborative care at the center of patient care and medical decision-making. OTP occurs when healthcare professionals work together to provide quality care without burdensome administrative constraints.

The major provisions of the legislation are:

- **Establishing a supervised career entry interval** of 4,000 clinical hours upon entry into PA practice, and a training interval of 1,000 hours if a PA changes specialty;
- **Defining team-based settings** as physician-owned practices, medical practices, and licensed health facilities;
- **Eliminating the legal requirement for experienced PAs** to have a specific relationship with a physician when working in a team-based setting; and
- **Requiring PAs to collaborate appropriately** based on patient need, PA education and experience level, and standard of care.

WHAT FEEDBACK DID NCAPA AND ITS MEMBERSHIP HAVE ON THE FORMULATION OF THIS LEGISLATION?

NCAPA convened an OTP Taskforce in August 2017 to take the American Academy of Physician Assistants' framework and develop a position statement that would work in North Carolina.

We then conducted listening sessions across the state in 2018 and received feedback about moving OTP forward in NC — chief among that feedback were concerns specific to a focus on team-based care, new grad support, regulations that ensure flexibility to meet patient needs, PA skill portability, and modernizing PA regulations.

WHY DOES NORTH CAROLINA NEED SB 345?

OTP is both a response to external pressures and the need to modernize our profession with the context of current practice environments.

Healthcare is changing at a rapid pace and PA laws aren't keeping up. Current PA laws in North Carolina date back to 1976, during a time when the profession was not as established as it currently is. These laws established one-size-fits-all supervision. Additionally, recent and ongoing healthcare worker shortages, and the COVID pandemic specifically, have highlighted the limitations of current PA practice laws.

We need to update the laws to better reflect current practice environments and prepare for future healthcare needs. PAs are established providers and should be responsible for the care they provide.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ISN'T OTP JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR INDEPENDENT PRACTICE?

No. OTP is not a façade for Independent Practice.

Rather, it is grounded in team based care. Currently, PAs work in a variety of practice environments. Physician supervision and collaboration varies depending on practice and specialty, and OTP is designed to be broad enough to fit all practice environments.

The PA profession's commitment to team practice is powerful and will remain. The PA and physician who work together get to keep all the benefits of the team without the legal risks and administrative burdens. Everyone wins.

PAs are well trained and should be able to work to the top of our training and education to meet today's healthcare needs. OTP moves from one size fits all supervision to practice level decision making and differentiates between early career and experienced PAs.

IS ANYONE ELSE SUPPORTING SB 345?

Yes. NCAPA, the North Carolina Medical Society, and the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians support SB 345.

The bill currently was introduced with three primary sponsors and has since gained three additional sponsors in the Senate.



SEN.
JIM PERRY



SEN.
MICHAEL LEE



SEN.
TODD JOHNSON



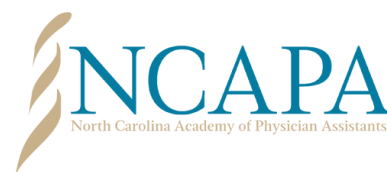
SEN.
LISA BARNES



SEN.
JIM BURGIN



SEN.
AMY GALEY



**North Carolina Academy
of Family Physicians**

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT SB 345?

NCAPA has launched **Support NC PAs** - an awareness and advocacy effort in support of SB 345.

Learn more, sign up, and take action now at:

SupportNCPAs.com

As SB 345 progresses through the legislature, we will continue to update you on its status and provide you with several opportunities to make your voice heard in support of this key PA legislation.

