



April 16, 2022

The Honorable Anne Parks, Chair
Occupational, Regulation, and Licensing Board Subcommittee
Of the House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Subcommittee
434D Blatt Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

RE: Requesting support of S.613, Delegation of Acts for Certified Medical Assistants (CMAs) and Unlicensed Personnel

To the Honorable Anne Parks:

Carolina Health Centers, Inc. (CHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that serves the seven rural counties of Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda. First established in 1977, CHC is proud to serve as the health care home for over 28,000 patients who receive high quality, primary and preventive care at our 12 medical practices and 2 community pharmacies.

On behalf of Carolina Health Centers (CHC) and the patients and communities we serve, I am writing to request support of S.613, a bill which would allow Physician Assistants (PAs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to fully utilize Certified Medical Assistants (CMA) to their full scope, similar to how a physician currently works with CMAs and unlicensed personnel. This bill comes before the Occupational, Regulation, and Licensing Board Subcommittee at a critical time as health centers like CHC are faced with clinical workforce challenges that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For decades, CMAs have been an integral part of the patient care team at CHC. Their education consists of a post-secondary medical assisting educational program accredited by the National Healthcare Association. CMAs specifically are equipped to work in clinic or school settings and are employed by Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), hospital systems, urgent care centers and private medical practice offices. A CMA's main role is to facilitate efficient and effective patient care by obtaining vital signs (i.e. blood pressure, pulse) and adding a patient's medications to their chart to be reviewed by a clinician. With PAs and APRNs practicing in clinic site settings where the physician may not be onsite that particular day, S.613 would allow PAs and APRNs to delegate tasks and medication administration orders within the CMA or unlicensed personnel scope.

What This Bill Does Not Do:

S.613 does not broaden the scope of the CMA, but rather allows Physicians, PAs and APRNs to delegate and supervise the CMA scope of duties.

How this Bill Supports Access to Primary and Preventive Health Care:

Passage of this legislation may assist with improving the efficiency of the care system, increasing the number of patients served and overcoming limitations resulting from the current nursing workforce shortage. As mentioned earlier, the workforce challenges at health centers have been exacerbated by pandemic burnout has directly affected frontline health care providers, including our ability to recruit and retain licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs) to fill

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this role supporting the clinicians. This bill would not only help address those challenges but provide a career pathway for individuals in the communities we serve.

Carolina Health Centers, Inc. is asking that you prioritize the advancement and passage of this important legislation. I am available to answer questions or provide more a detailed explanation and examples of how this legislation will benefit communities all across South Carolina and can be reached at sveer@carolinahealthcenters.org or at 864-554-7102 (mobile telephone).

Thank you for your consideration of this bill as well as the important work you do for our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Veer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Veer, MBA
President and CEO
Carolina Health Centers, Inc.

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