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Response 1

I agree that the increase of non-physician providers in the United States is because of disparities in the healthcare sector. Non-physician providers such as advanced nursing practitioners like certified registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses are the initial caregivers patients get to interact with. They help improve health care quality because they allow the physician to attend to health-related difficult situations like conducting surgery. Non-physician providers are well placed to ensure and initiate best care practices when handling patients because they possess robust training and prompt care delivery (Boucher et al., 2015). Compared to physicians, non-physician providers' services are cost-effective because they desire to ensure the patient is in good health.

It is true that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) should be given a larger role in delivering primary care to patients. Studies show that APRNs deliver similar quality care to physicians. Expanding their scope will help abate the shortage of health care workers because APRNs can help fill in the gap because they are clinically trained to handle patients from different walks of life. I accede that their scope-of-practice should be increased because it is currently hindering them from practicing fully since they are under constant supervision (Feringa et al., 2018). Despite their exemplary training, the supervision may affect their performance because they cannot make decisions regarding the patient's treatment or diagnosis, resulting in low morale.

It is with no doubt that primary care is important because it reduces the incidence and severity of the leading causes of disease and disability through preventive interventions that address behavioral health risks, leading to improved population health and health care. Besides, primary care is also essential because it helps lower costs, especially when choosing a primary

care physician (PCP) who helps them navigate towards staying healthy and preventing diseases by identifying the risk factors (Agarwal et al., 2017).

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Peer Response 2

I agree that due to the ¹shortage of health care physicians, especially in the rural areas in the United States, the Advanced Practice Practitioners (APPs) have had to fill in the gap by delivering quality care to inpatients and outpatients. APPs are highly trained, which is why many studies show that they can deliver more than just quality care because they can act as mentors and researchers as the advocate for patients from different populations. Their increase in numbers over the previous years has shown that health care access has been easy for most patients because their services are cost-effective compared to physicians.

I concur that expanding the scope of practice for APPs would facilitate speedier healthcare deliveries, saving money for patients, Medicare and Medicaid, and private payers. The APPs' scope of practice is governed and regulated by ²the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). An ongoing debate regarding whether APPs' should be allowed to handle more

responsibilities since there is a high demand for particular healthcare aspects that need immediate attention, such as mental health and primary care (Cahill et al., 2019). Some of the changes advocated for are an independent practice and authorizing orders for medical supplies and equipment. I agree that primary care is vital for patients because their health needs will be met. Primary care providers like non-physician providers and physicians improve the patient's life by offering medical advice and practices they can adhere to to help them improve their quality of life and health situation. Also, primary care is essential because patients can access regular screenings and health check-ups, reducing their chances of going through unfortunate health events (Samimi et al., 2020).

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Response 3

All the health care professionals from within and without the health care division make up the healthcare workforce. They include pharmacists, physicians, nurses, dentists, and every support staff who offer indirect services critical to the reliable and efficient functioning of the health care system, such as the drivers, accountants, and managers. Health professionals achieve the objectives set by healthcare systems. Hence, I concur that the data or attributes of healthcare

professionals must be incorporated into the health care information system. The inadequacy of the mentioned component would lead to serious work mal-distribution and shortages in the healthcare system. If the healthcare system is well utilized and implemented, it has a lot of benefits to offer. The list of benefits is unending, from enhanced access to health care services to revamped quality of care.

The access, quality, and cost of the healthcare system can be affected by the increase in the number of NPP's because they tend to amplify each physician's reach. Hence, access to healthcare systems can be enhanced and lead to patient participation. Also, when qualified and capable NPP's are incorporated in the healthcare system, they tend to improve their focus on increased access and customer engagement; thus, increasing quality. Moreover, NPP's reduces healthcare services costs since it allows it to offer health care services to many patients and relieve the physician of the unnecessary workload (Nyweide et al., 2020). The scope concept limits healthcare professionals from reaching their full potential and creates barriers in the healthcare system. Hence, it is true that if the scope is extended, then the healthcare professionals will not be limited to their profession or location but would allow them to shift to other duties demanding attention. Therefore, primary health is essential because it helps improve access to healthcare services, reduces the cost, provides quality services to patients, and advocates for the continuity of the health care service (Martin-Fernandez et al., 2017).

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Response 4

Nonphysician medical providers include but are not limited to registered nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, physician assistants, registered nurse anesthetists, and nurse-midwives. There is an increase in the number of nonphysician medical caregivers in the United States, which may lower the healthcare costs but does not necessarily mean that the quality of care is less. According to Boucher, NPP's are capable and qualified to provide a high and competent quality of care since they are held to a standard of adhering to best medical practices and can execute guidelines and protocols which is accede with. It is also believed that the NPP's provide better care than most physicians because they are willing and have time to work on their patients (Boucher et al., 2015). They are more available and accessible to patients than physicians. According to Medicare, physician assistants and nonphysician providers can bill for a maximum of 84% of what a physician can bill for. Hence, physicians are more expensive to see and be treated than NPP's (Graves et al., 2016).

APRN's full practice authority continues to grow as the debate about the concept of scope continues to affect many individuals in the healthcare system. It is believed that the scope limits APRN's to use all their skills and knowledge on other things beyond their scope. However, it is true that many individuals could benefit from the provision of more services by unlocking the full potential of the APRN's skills and knowledge. The risk of diseases and illness decreases when people seek primary healthcare. Primary care is considered extremely important

for disease prevention, screening, and overall health. Hence, extending the scope of the APRN's will ensure that primary healthcare is accessible and affordable to everyone in America.

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