

IHA Legislative Position 2010

Nursing Workforce



The Role of the Advanced Practice Nurse in Rural Iowa

The future of health care is closely tied to the future of nursing. Advanced Practice Nurses represent a valuable resource in the national effort to provide timely, affordable health care and the demand for their services is expected to escalate due to the critical shortage of primary care physicians, an aging baby boomer population, continued efforts to improve quality and the introduction of medical homes.

Iowa hospitals employ advanced practice nurses in a variety of roles including: certified clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse practitioners, certified nurse mid-wives and certified registered nurse anesthetists. Recently, specialty physician groups have attempted to restrict current nursing practice by declaring chronic interventional pain management the practice of medicine and not within the scope of practice of other health care professionals. These same groups have also attempted to block the supervision of fluoroscopic radiography by advanced practice nurses.

★ Iowa Hospital Association Position

The Iowa General Assembly must understand that advanced nursing practice enhances patient access to effective, integrated and coordinated health care and provides a much needed link to the most vulnerable of our population such as the elderly and those living in rural and underserved areas.

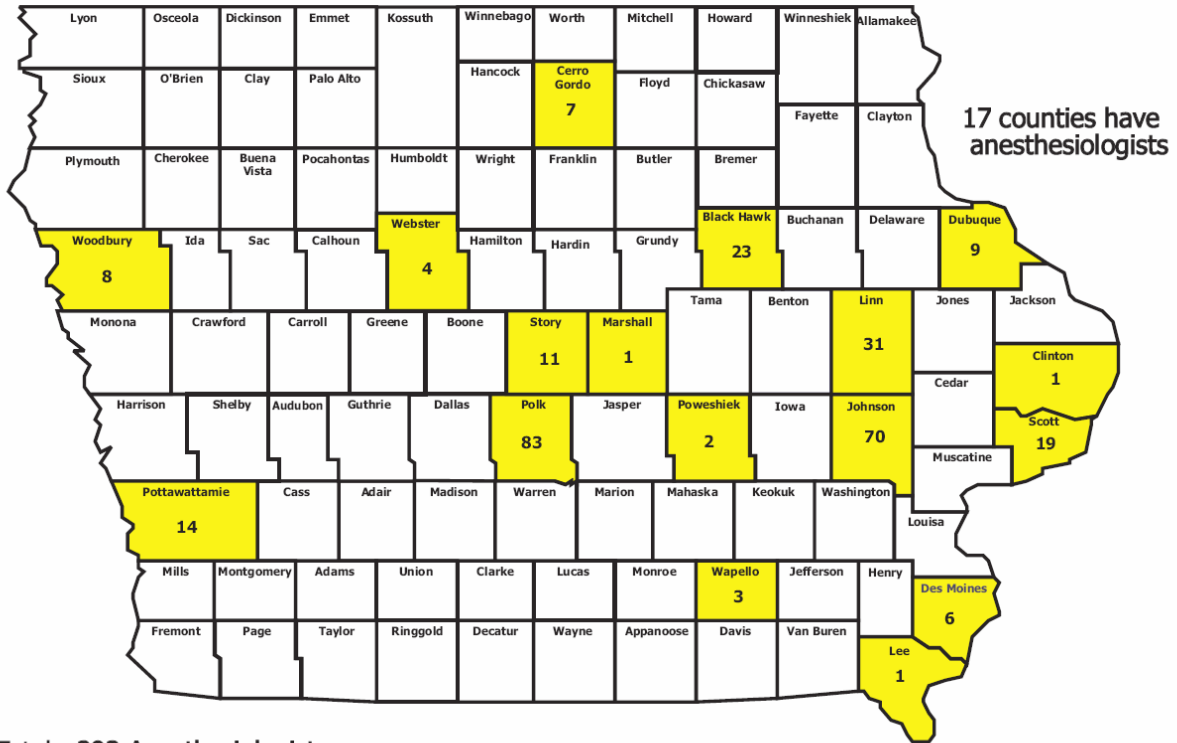
The Iowa Hospital Association supports the protection of long standing scope of practice patterns for advanced practice nurses. Specifically, IHA supports the current practice of chronic pain management by Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists and the supervision of fluoroscopic radiography by Advanced Practice Nurses.

Chronic pain can be debilitating and often becomes the defining factor in patient's lives. Without relief, or the hope of relief, many patients lose the ability to eat, sleep, work and function normally. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists have been safely and successfully treating chronic pain in Iowa hospitals for two decades. To date, the Iowa Board of Nursing cannot identify a single disciplinary action taken against a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist relevant to chronic interventional pain management. Any legislation that would limit the ability of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist to treat patients with chronic pain would have far reaching implications. For example, some Iowans would have to travel over 100 miles and contend with waiting times of six weeks to see a pain management physician – both of which would be difficult for someone experiencing chronic pain.

The supervision of fluoroscopic radiography allows both Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists and Certified Nurse Practitioners to collaborate with Radiologic Technologists for the purpose of visualizing the precise spot to inject a medication, place a vascular device or locate a foreign body, which in turn can lead to better outcomes for the patient than using a blind technique. Although the supervision of fluoroscopic radiography aids in providing the best patient care for a variety of procedures outside the realm of pain management, specialty physician groups continue to challenge the practice based on its use during chronic pain management procedures.

IHA believes that the Board of Nursing is the organization with the knowledge, expertise and legal authority for regulating and enforcing rules of nursing practice and opposes any attempt by medical specialties to regulate nursing practice in order to advance their own proprietary interests.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION Anesthesiologists

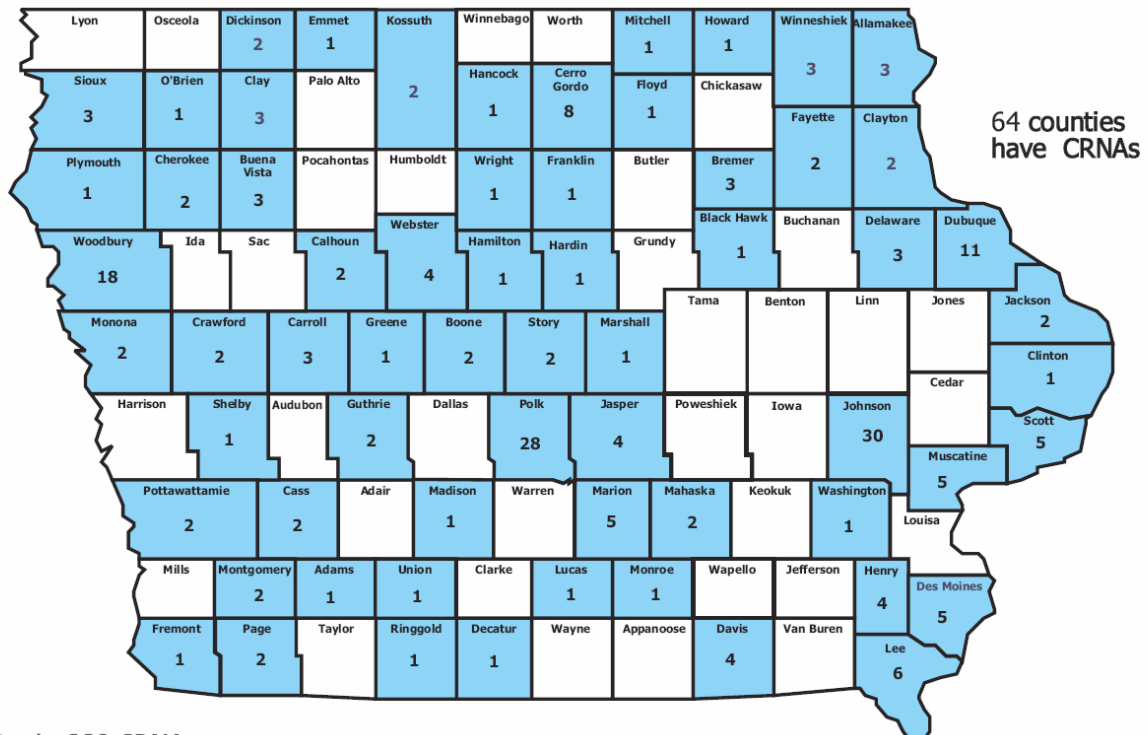


Total: 293 Anesthesiologists

Source: Office of Statewide Clinical Education Programs, UI Carver College of Medicine, December 2008

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GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)



Total: 220 CRNAs

Source: Office of Statewide Clinical Education Programs, UI Carver College of Medicine, December 2008

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