



APRN ROUNDTABLE **INSIGHTS FOR IMPACT**

April 29, 2026 · Virtual



Requiring RN Clinical Experience for APRN Licensure

Peggy Sellers Benson, MSN, RN,
MSHA, NE-BC

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INSIGHTS FOR IMPACT



Background (Genesis of Action)

- Employer complaints related to new grad CRNPs
 - Little or no previous RN experience
 - Dismissal from employment due to patient safety concerns
- Physician and trade association complaints regarding inadequate preparation for the advanced practice nurse
 - Lack of clinical knowledge
 - Role application in the clinical setting
 - Patient safety concerns



Definition: Direct Entry

- Little or no RN experience required prior to APRN program entry, graduation, and APRN approval



What is an Advanced Practice Nurse

Organization	Definition
APRN Consensus Model	They are registered nurses educated in a specific role and patient population at a Master's or post-Master's level.
National Council of State Legislatures	Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) are licensed nurses with post-graduate education and training in nursing.
National Cancer Institute	A registered nurse who has additional education and training in how to diagnose and treat disease. Advanced practice nurses are licensed at the state level and certified by national nursing organizations.
Nurse.org	An advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) is a registered nurse who has completed advanced specialty training to develop skills, knowledge, and experience in a specific patient population or skill set. APRNs hold, at minimum, an MSN, but many continue their education and earn a doctorate in nursing practice.

Problem Identification

ABN conducted an internal licensure review of direct entry applicants, and ABN APRN educational program admission requirements.

FINDINGS:

- Observed increase in direct entry CRNP applications since 2020
- Frequently from online programs
- Lack of consistent education program entry requirements



Inconsistent APRN Admission Policies

Alabama APRN Program	Admission Policy Related to RN Experience
CNM (1)	No prior RN experience - one program
12 Universities Not all programs have all CRNP population foci	3 universities require previous RN experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One program (Central Alabama) - 1 year (FNP program only)• One program (North Alabama) - 1,000 hours before first clinical• One program (South Alabama) - 2 years before first clinical - all 8 population foci
CRNA programs	Require 1-2 years RN critical care experience
Neonatal programs	All programs met the national standards, which require previous RN experience



Why RN Experience Matters

Title/Author	Summary/Conclusion
The Impact of Clinical Experience in Advanced Practice Nursing Education—A Cross-Sectional Study of Norwegian Advanced Practice Nurses' Perspectives	The results of this study indicate that clinical nursing experience is an essential contributor to the development of professional competence and a nursing identity. APNs and APN students perceive that there is an association between previous clinical nursing experience and the ability to achieve APN education programs' learning outcomes. Conclusively, the reasons for not including clinical nursing experience as a prerequisite for entry to APN programs should be carefully considered. (Leonardsen, 2023)
Latrina Walden, Founder & CEO of Latrina Walden Exam Solutions (LWES)	Why Comprehensive Learning Depends on Experience Comprehensive learning requires context: RN Experience Before NP School: Is it a Requirement we are afraid to Enforce? "Understanding <i>why</i> a patient presents a certain way, how symptoms evolve, and when subtle changes matter cannot be fully replicated in textbooks or question banks. RN experience historically provided this context. Bedside nursing builds pattern recognition, patient communication skills, and comfort with uncertainty. These elements are essential for developing the type of clinical thinking rewarded—not just by exams—but by real-world practice." (Walden, 2026)



Purpose: Revised Licensure Rules

- Public Protection
- Patient Safety
- Establishing consistency in entry pathways for education
- Ensure the APRN student is experientially prepared to be an advance practice nurse



ABN Board Action To Date

- At its November 2025 meeting, the ABN approved final rules requiring new CRNPs and CNMs to document 3,000 hours of RN or APRN clinical practice prior to APRN approval. These rule changes took effect on January 10, 2026, but with a delayed operative date of January 31, 2027.
- Pursuant to a subsequent agreement between Board staff, the Chairman of the Alabama House Health Committee, and other stakeholders, the Board repealed those specific provisions in March 2026, with the intent of convening an ad hoc committee of stakeholders to determine the appropriate number of hours to be documented prior to approval, and to newly propose the requirement without disruption of the January 31, 2027, implementation date.



Summary

- The ABN will establish clinical experience requirements for APRN approval.

Note: If left unaddressed, the prevalence in inadequate experience undermines the rationale for independent practice and can implicate patient safety concerns for direct entry APRNs.



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The Role of RN Experience in APRN Program Entry: Insights and Implications

Gina Dennik-Champion, MSN, RN,
MSHA

Executive Director and Lobbyist
Wisconsin Nurses Association

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The Policy Agenda

Problems



Photo by [Matthew Waring](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Proposed Solutions



Politics



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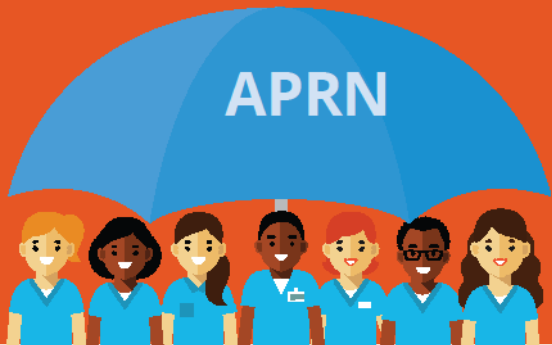


Wisconsin APRN Modernization Act

1995 Wisconsin State Statute



2025 Wisconsin State Statute



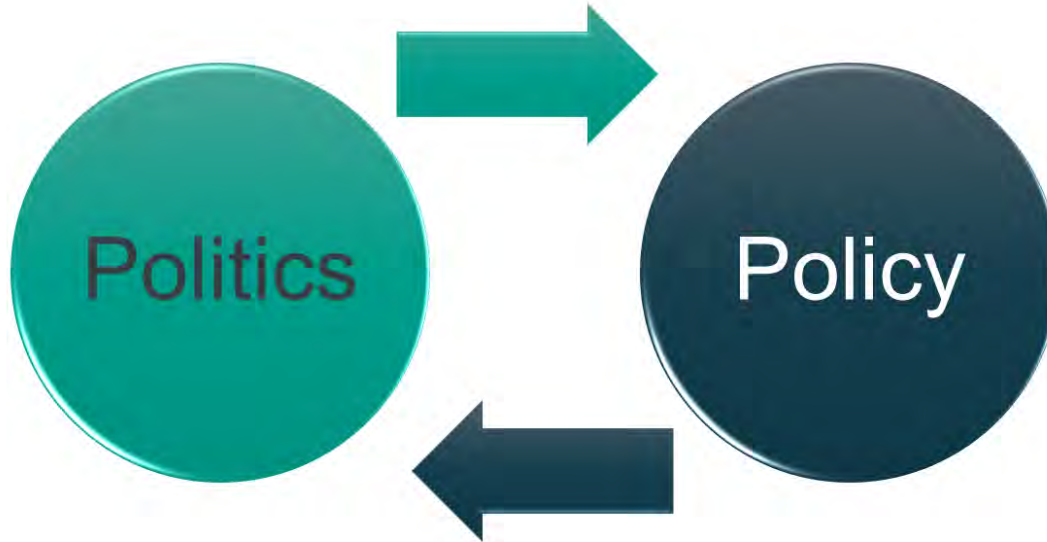
- The goal of this legislation:
 - APRN licensure
 - Independent practice
 - Include all four roles
 - Preserve prescriptive authority that was adopted in 1995.

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The Two are Never Separated



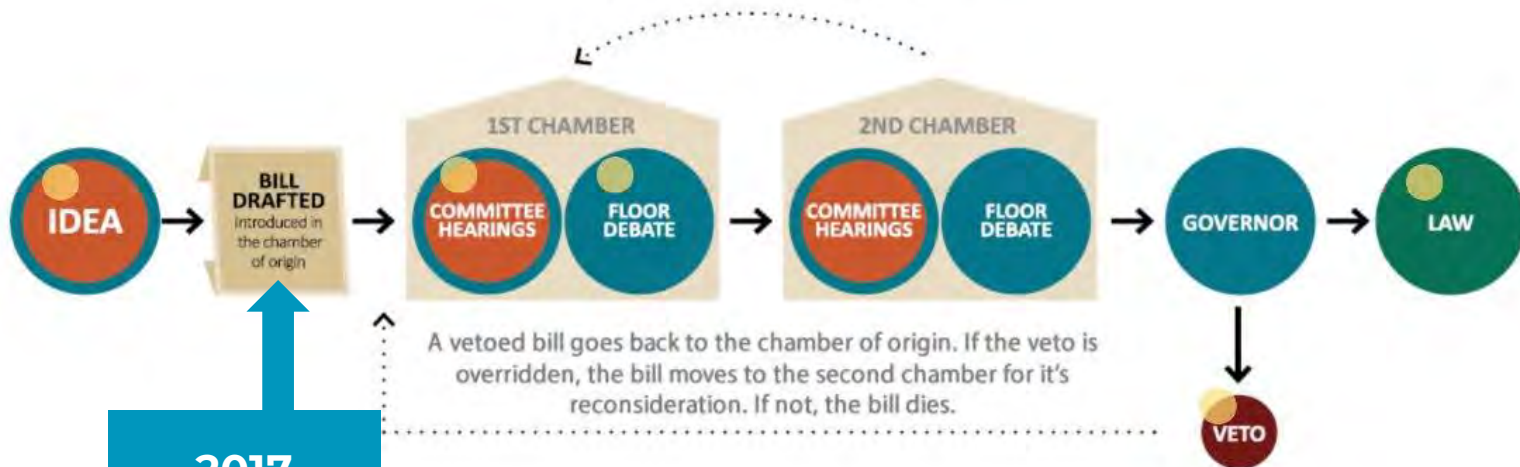
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Five Year Plus Journey - 2017

State Legislative process

If changed, the bill is sent back to the chamber of origin for approval or further consideration



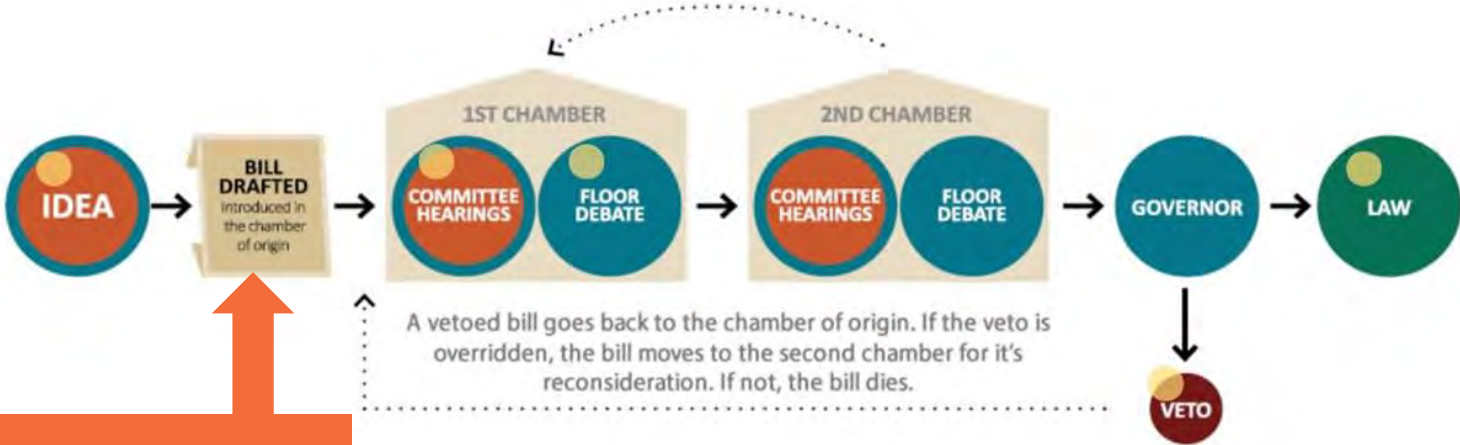
2017
Who are
APRNs ?



Five Year Plus Journey - 2019

State Legislative process

If changed, the bill is sent back to the chamber of origin for approval or further consideration



Negotiations stalled



Five Year Plus Journey - 2021

State Legislative process

If changed, the bill is sent back to the chamber of origin for approval or further consideration



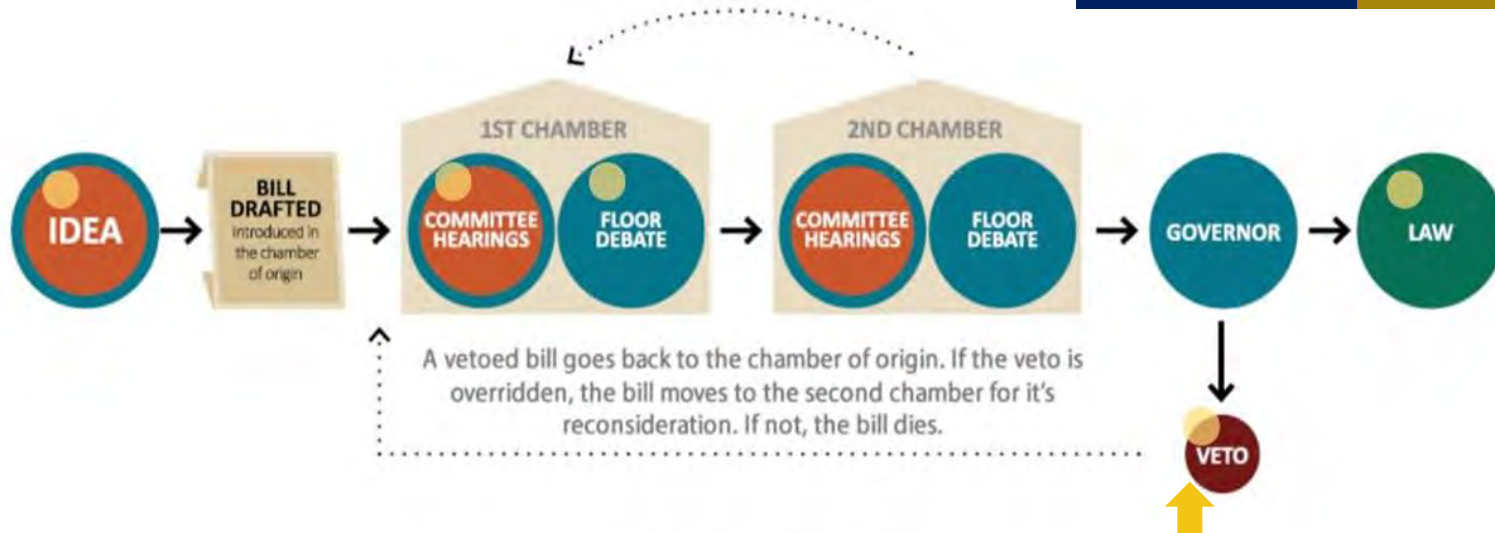
Opposition! To gain independent practice, Governor proposed amendment: 2 years clinical experience and 2 years of physician collaboration.



Five Year Plus Journey - 2023

State Legislative process

If changed, the bill is sent back to the chamber of origin for approval or further consideration



Two legislative bills	
Governor's Budget 2 yr + 2 yr	Legislative Bill No 2 + 2 but 3 yrs Collaboration

Governor Veto

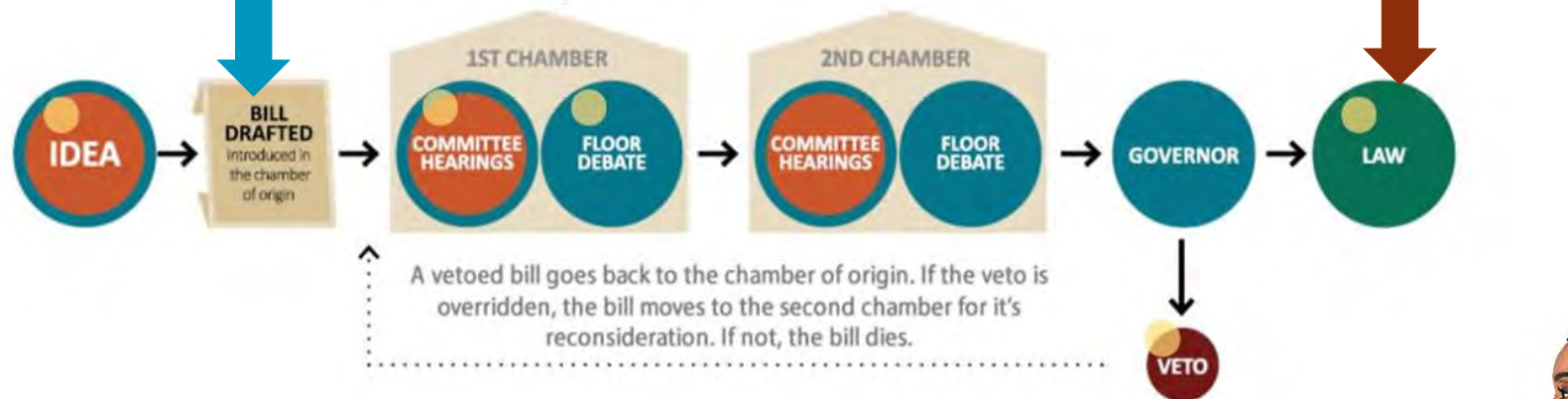


Five Year Plus Journey - 2025

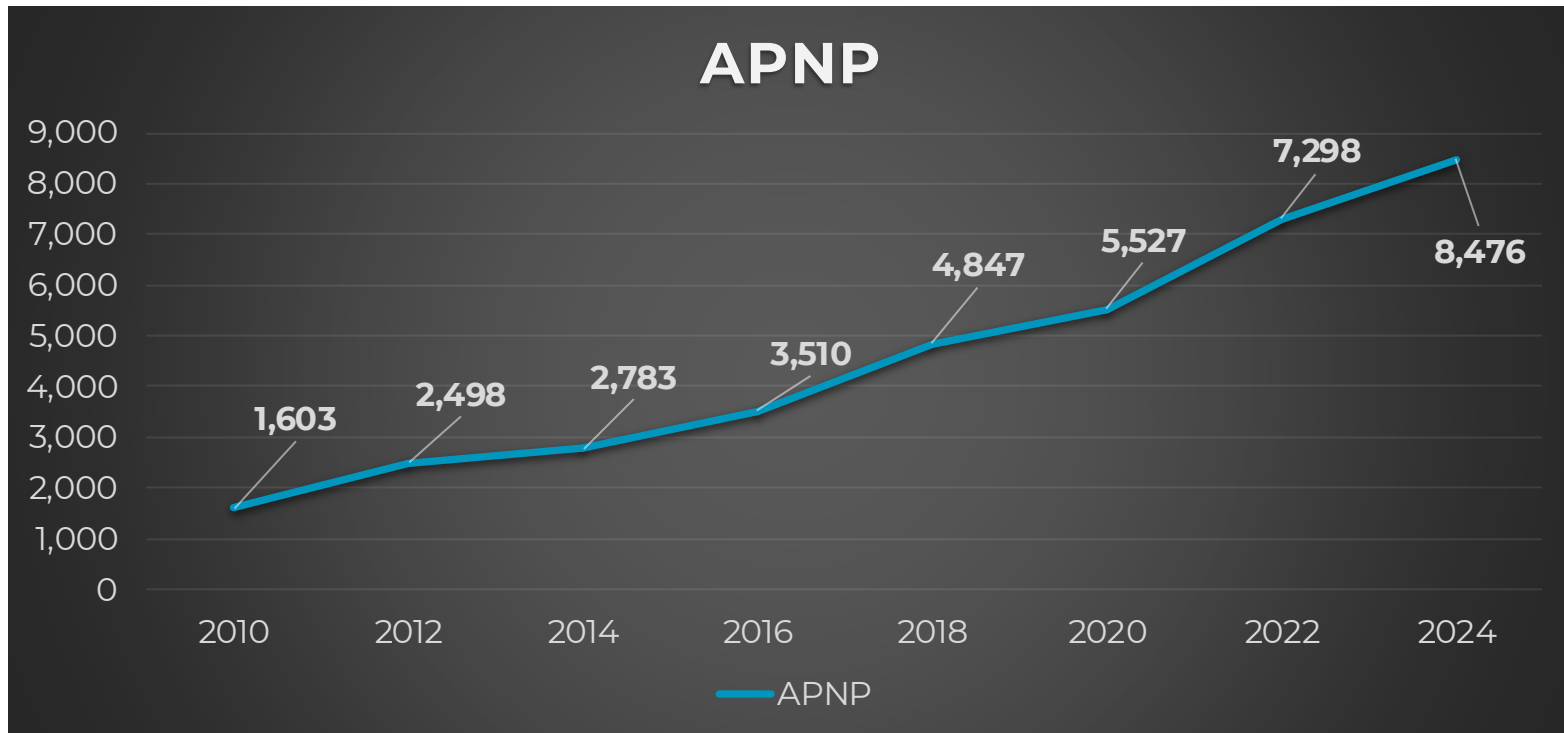
Negotiations and
Consensus with the
Governor
2 yr + 2 yr

State Legislative process

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for approval or further consideration



Growth of Wisconsin APNP's



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Factors to Consider

1995 Wisconsin State Statute



2025 Wisconsin State Statute



The original journey began in 2002

Title protection for NP

Coalition formed

Consensus Model used for legislation

Legislator understanding

COVID-19 Governor removed collaboration requirements

Influencers – Board of Nursing, hospital association, organized medicine.

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Factors to Consider



Policy vs Politics

Republicans had majority
in Senate and Assembly
Democratic governor
Contentious
environment



**Very little research
on competencies
of APRNs with 2
years of clinical
experience.**



**Precedent: CRNA
education requires
2 years of critical
care nursing
experience.**



**Graduate level
nursing programs
response remained
neutral with the
2025 legislation.**



Factors to Consider



The legislation also contained other compromises:

Interventional pain management.

- Physician collaboration for free-standing pain management centers that operate without admitting privileges or referral to health system.

Removal of title protection for physicians practicing as “ologists”.



The goal of an APRN licensure, a pathway to independent practice and knowledge that statutes can be amended in the future was the deciding factor in getting the bill over the finish line.



Thank you

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