

# Nursing study investigates link between growth of retail-based clinics and nurse practitioner scope-of-practice reform

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Just as primary care provider shortages are becoming acute, retail-based clinics in pharmacies and grocery stores are set to fill the gap in accessible patient care. Yet in some states, access to this convenient care is constrained due to restrictive scope-of-practice laws.

Provided by University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

A new University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing's Center for Health Outcomes & Policy Research (CHOPR) study has investigated scope-of-practice regulatory environments and retail-based clinic growth. Data indicate that optimization of innovative healthcare sites such as retail based clinics will require moving toward adoption of policies that standardize the scope of practice for [nurse practitioners](#), who largely staff retail-based clinics. The study, "Growth in retail-based clinics after nurse practitioner scope of practice reform," has been published in *Nursing Outlook*.

J. Margo Brooks Carthon, PhD, RN, FAAN, Assistant Professor of Nursing and a Senior Fellow at CHOPR and the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, led the study that examined the association between scope-of-practice regulations and retail-based clinic growth in Pennsylvania before and after the passage of Prescription for Pennsylvania (Rx4PA) health reform. The reform was linked, in part, to removal of practice barriers for advanced practice nurses.

"Our finding of a net increase in retail clinics in Pennsylvania post-legislation suggests a relationship between the ability of nurse practitioners to provide a wider range of services and the growth of an innovative model that aims to increase access to care," says Brooks Carthon. "This new data underscores the importance of careful scrutiny of overly restrictive practice regulations."

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