Opening a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Office in Iowa

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Executive Summary

This paper investigates the disparity in access to pediatric health care in Clinton County, Iowa and examines the feasibility of an independent nurse practitioner (NP) practice to improve access to needed services. The population of interest for this paper is the pediatric population, serving children from birth to 22 years of age. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has determined that the ratio of pediatricians to children under the age of 18 years of age be 1:1,769; Iowa ranked 46th in the nation in the pediatrician to pediatric population ratio (Jewett, 2005). Healthy People 2020 objectives for children include increased access to a medical home, an increased proportion of children screened for developmental delays by 24 months, and reducing both growth retardation and obesity for children (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services [USDHHS], 2011). This capstone project identifies a medically underserved area (MUA) in Iowa and develops a business plan for a pediatric nurse practitioner practice within this MUA. A literature review investigates access to pediatric care in rural areas and the criteria established to identify a MUA in Iowa. Rural health care needs, patient outcomes and satisfaction with care provided by a NP, and barriers to practice are identified. A risk analysis and an action plan were developed. A business plan was developed. The plan included: a mission statement, budgetary and fiscal considerations. The plan was then evaluated and implications for practice are presented.