

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this project was to assess the needs of Florida nurse practitioners in regards to their readiness to engage in health coaching services pursuant to the preventative care provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The PPACA directs the creation of a national prevention and health promotion strategy to improve the health status of Americans and reduce the incidence of preventable illness and disability in the United States. This study assessed factors such as how Florida nurse practitioners use health promotion interventions in their practices, whether their graduate nursing education prepared them to provide health coaching, their perceptions of the importance of health promotion and prevention, and how advanced practice nursing may be impacted with full implementation of the PPACA.

This study found that the 142 Florida nurse practitioners in 36 counties who were surveyed are uniformly aware of the increased need for prevention and health promotion and are currently providing many types of preventative care services within their practice settings across a wide variety of specialty areas. The majority of those who participated in this study are aware of the increased opportunities and requirements for preventative care created by the PPACA. Most respondents indicated that they view the PPACA as an opportunity to expand the nurse practitioner role and would be willing to engage with patients using a health coaching model.

This project also demonstrated that Florida nurse practitioners believe that symptoms associated with diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and COPD may be prevented or reduced through health coaching. A strong positive correlation was seen between years of advanced practice nursing experience and willingness to adopt a health and wellness coaching strategy as a new approach to health care that focuses on prevention.

The training needs of participants, in order to be fully prepared to provide health promotion and prevention services, were identified as health coaching skills and culturally competent care. Recommendations were made concerning continuing education offerings, academic curricula, and certification programs that could address these topics. The goals of health promotion and wellness coaching are to improve health outcomes and reduce health costs for individuals, employers, third party payers, and the nation at large.