

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Shapiro Administration Fully Implements Multistate Licensure  
Compacts, Expanding Job Opportunities and Cutting Red Tape for  
Health Care Workers**

*Starting today, Pennsylvania is a full participant in three multistate licensure compacts that make it easier for doctors, nurses, and physical therapists who are qualified and licensed in other states to practice in the Commonwealth within days — helping to meet critical staffing needs and improve access to care.*

*This move cuts red tape and streamlines licensing, opening new job opportunities for more than 380,000 health care professionals across the Commonwealth.*

*By helping qualified providers get to work faster, the Shapiro Administration is expanding access to care and strengthening Pennsylvania's health care workforce.*



**York, PA** – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** joined **Secretary of the Commonwealth Al Schmidt**, health care leaders, and lawmakers at WellSpan Education Center in York to announce that Pennsylvania is now a full participant in three health care licensure compacts that make it easier for qualified doctors, nurses, and physical therapists to provide care across state lines.

Instead of requiring months to complete the full licensure process, as a result of full compact participation, out-of-state practitioners are now able to contribute to Pennsylvania's health care workforce within days — helping to meet critical staffing needs and improve access to care. This milestone builds on the **Shapiro Administration's** work to reduce barriers, cut red tape, and meet the needs of the Commonwealth's critical health care workforce.

Starting today, Pennsylvania's full participation in the **Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC)**, **Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)**, and **Physical Therapy Licensure Compact (PT Compact)** gives more than 300,000 nurses, nearly 65,000 doctors, and more than 17,000 physical therapists additional flexibility to practice in

dozens of states — while also allowing licensed providers from other states to work in Pennsylvania. As states across the country face critical health care workforce shortages, the Shapiro Administration is breaking down barriers to encourage more doctors, nurses, and physical therapists to practice in Pennsylvania.

“Thanks to the diligent, continuous hard work of the Department of State – and the support of bipartisan leaders in the House and Senate — we’ve finally leveled the playing field for doctors, nurses, and physical therapists in Pennsylvania,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “We listened to nurses, doctors, and lawmakers who called on us to fully implement these health care compacts, and we got it done. At a time when Pennsylvania is facing real health care worker shortages — from hospitals to home care — this move will make it easier to attract and retain qualified professionals and help fill critical gaps in care across the Commonwealth.”

Health care compacts streamline the application process, allowing qualified professionals to prove they meet licensing requirements to provide care in multiple states — helping address shortages and expand access to care.

“Since Governor Shapiro took office, the Department of State has worked diligently with the U.S. Department of Justice, Pennsylvania State Police, and a bipartisan collection of Congressional allies to complete the steps necessary for Pennsylvania to fully participate in these compacts,” said **Secretary Schmidt**. “Previous administrations began the work, but after years of waiting, the Shapiro Administration finally got it done.”

“This will have a positive impact on both patients and team members,” said **Patty Donley, Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive at WellSpan Health**. “By streamlining licensure processes, we will now be able to respond faster to patient needs and ensure continuity of care across state lines. For health systems like ours at WellSpan, this means there will be more support and more time to focus on what matters most: our patients.”

“As a nurse in Maryland — a Nurse Licensure Compact state — I’m excited Pennsylvania has fully joined the compact,” said **Hollis King, a student at the Jersey College School of Nursing at WellSpan Health**. “This allows nurses like me to move more easily between states for work, breaking down barriers and providing flexibility in a competitive job market. Compact licensure expands career opportunities, supports work-life balance, and helps me adapt in today’s fast-changing healthcare field.”

Pennsylvania is confronting real health care workforce shortages that affect communities across the Commonwealth. More than 850,000 Pennsylvanians live in areas identified by the federal government as having too few health care providers. At the same time, about 14 percent of nursing jobs across the state are vacant — and that rate climbs to 26 percent in rural areas. By 2026, Pennsylvania is projected to face a shortage of 20,000 nurses, underscoring the growing challenge of meeting patient needs.

Fully implementing these compacts helps to address these shortages by making it easier for qualified medical professionals from dozens of states to come here and work, and by creating new job opportunities for Pennsylvanians who want to care for their communities.

“As Chairman of the House Professional Licensure Committee, I’ve worked closely with the Governor’s Administration to bring these vital health care compacts across the finish line,” said **Representative Frank Burns, Chairman of the PA House Professional Licensure Committee**. “This milestone couldn’t have happened without bipartisan cooperation in the House and Senate, or without the Department of State working hand-in-hand with the FBI and DOJ to ensure Pennsylvania met every requirement. And above all, it wouldn’t have been possible without Governor Shapiro’s leadership and commitment to cutting red tape and getting stuff done for the people of Pennsylvania.”

### **Building on Progress in York and Across Pennsylvania**

In June 2024, WellSpan Health and Jersey College [launched](#) an accredited School of Nursing in York offering an associate degree, helping dozens of students start health care careers. The inaugural class began in August 2024, training at WellSpan York Hospital and other facilities.

“Today marks an important step forward for Pennsylvania’s healthcare workforce. By joining these interstate licensure compacts, we’re making it easier for qualified doctors, nurses, and physical therapists to come here and care for our communities,” said **Stephanie Watkins, Senior VP of Advocacy and Policy, Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania**. “This milestone helps address ongoing workforce shortages — especially in rural and underserved areas — by cutting red tape and speeding up the process so healthcare professionals can get to work sooner. We’re grateful for the bipartisan support that made this possible, and we look forward to building on this momentum to keep strengthening Pennsylvania’s healthcare system.”

This new compact participation complements the **Shapiro Administration’s** broader work to strengthen Pennsylvania’s health care workforce and invest in future providers, including:

- **Reducing average processing times for professional licenses:** Registered Nurse and Licensed Practical Nurse licenses: **from 25 business days to just 5**; Physician/Surgeon (M.D.) licenses: **from 43 to 10 days**; Physical Therapist licenses: **from 31 to 3 days**; and Pharmacist licenses: **from 26 to 5 days**
- **Eliminating the Medicaid provider enrollment backlog**, which stood at 35,000 when Governor Shapiro took office

- **Providing \$2 million in first-time state funding** for nursing apprenticeships
- **Awarding \$22 million in student loan repayment** to approximately 400 substance use disorder treatment professionals

Building on this, **Governor Shapiro's** [2025-26 budget proposal](#) includes:

- \$5 million to create the **Nurse Shortage Assistance Program**, covering tuition costs for students who commit to work at Pennsylvania hospitals
- \$5 million to expand the **Primary Care Loan Repayment Program** for providers in rural communities
- \$10 million to assist hospitals statewide, leveraging \$25.1 million in federal matching funds for a total of \$35.1 million
- \$10 million to expand behavioral health loan repayment programs
- \$20 million in patient safety and support funding to help hospitals address barriers like affordability and access
- Legislation to grant full practice authority to nurse practitioners who have worked under a physician for three years

These achievements demonstrate the **Shapiro Administration's** commitment to building a stronger health care workforce, supporting professionals, and expanding access to care for all Pennsylvanians — [making government work for you](#).

Read more about [Governor Shapiro's 2025-26 budget proposal](#). Explore the Governor's 2025-26 Budget in Brief [here](#), or visit [shapirobudget.pa.gov](http://shapirobudget.pa.gov) to learn more.

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