

## Iowa Supreme Court Makes Healthcare Decision

Written by Marlene McDowell  
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### Iowa Supreme Court Decision Protects Nursing Practice, Ensures Patient Access to Care

PARK RIDGE, Illinois—Iowa patients were the big winners when the Iowa Supreme Court affirmed on Friday that the supervision of fluoroscopy, a type of x-ray imaging used in healthcare procedures such as pain management, is within the scope of practice for the state's advanced registered nurse practitioners (ARNPs), including nurse anesthetists.

“The Iowa Association of Nurse Anesthetists (IANA) joins the Iowa Board of Nursing and the Iowa Nurses Association in applauding this momentous decision that enables thousands of Iowans to continue receiving care from highly qualified ARNPs such as Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, or CRNAs,” said IANA spokesperson Mindy Miller, CRNA. “We couldn't be more pleased that our state's Supreme Court recognized, in its own words, that ‘allowing ARNP supervision of fluoroscopy improves access to health care for rural Iowans and helps lower costs,’ especially at a time when healthcare access and cost-containment are foremost on the minds of all Americans.”

In reversing a lower court's October 31, 2011 ruling against ARNP supervision of fluoroscopy, the Supreme Court stated that “the district court erred” in invalidating the Department of Public Health and Board of Nursing rules that allow qualified ARNPs to supervise fluoroscopy. The original lawsuit, brought by the Iowa Medical Society and the Iowa Society of Anesthesiologists in June 2010, alleged that the Department of Public Health and Board of Nursing had exceeded their rulemaking authority, and that the fluoroscopy rules illegally expanded ARNP scope of practice and authorized ARNPs to practice medicine.

ARNPs use fluoroscopy in numerous procedures they perform within their scope of their practice, such as interventional pain management, catheter insertion, and foreign body location. Use of fluoroscopy in these and other procedures allows ARNPs to see the precise spot to inject medicine or insert a device. If ARNPs were not permitted to supervise fluoroscopy, patients in rural and other medically underserved areas would have to travel—sometimes great distances—to receive their care from physicians instead of from qualified healthcare professionals closer to home.

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“The Supreme Court acknowledged that CRNAs and other advanced registered nurse practitioners have been safely providing these services for years,” said Miller. “The court’s decision validates the fact that the Board of Nursing does indeed have authority to regulate its practitioners, and it puts patients’ interests ahead of the unsupported claims of organized medicine.”

### About the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA)

Founded in 1931 and located in Park Ridge, Ill., the AANA is the professional organization representing more than 45,000 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) and student registered nurse anesthetists. As advanced practice registered nurses, CRNAs administer approximately 33 million anesthetics to patients in the United States each year and are the primary providers of anesthesia care in rural America. In some states, CRNAs are the sole anesthesia professionals in nearly 100 percent of rural hospitals. For more information visit [www.aana.com](http://www.aana.com).-----