



Research Triangle Institute Study

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Health Affairs: No Harm Found When Nurse Anesthetists Work Without Supervision by Physicians

The Research Triangle Institute (RTI) was commissioned by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Foundation to conduct a research study to examine patient safety when Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) administer anesthesia care without supervision by physicians. In August 2010, the findings of the study were published in an article in Health Affairs titled “No Harm Found When Nurse Anesthetists Work Without Supervision by Physicians.”

*The research study found **no evidence of increased death or complications** in the states that opted out of the federal Medicare rule requiring physician supervision of CRNAs and also recommended that other states opt out.*

Key Findings:

- Based on a study of nearly 500,000 Medicare cases between 1999-2005, the RTI study found **no evidence** that opting out of the federal oversight requirement of CRNAs by a physician resulted in **increased patient deaths or complications**.
- **No evidence was found** to suggest **an increase in patient risk** associated with anesthesia provided by a CRNA.
- After careful study of various anesthesia care delivery models, **no evidence** was found that **patient safety was ever compromised** by the opt-out policy.
- **Every state should be allowed to opt-out** of the federal oversight requirement of CRNAs.
- Allowing CRNAs to engage as solo practitioners would lead to **more cost effective care**.

(Full Health Affairs article attached)