



## **National Academies of Practice Position Statement: Access to Healthcare**

The National Academies of Practice (NAP), a non-profit organization founded in 1981, advises governmental bodies on policies and practices to improve the U.S. healthcare delivery system. NAP membership is comprised of practitioners, scholars, and public policy members elected by their peers. NAP includes multiple health professions academies: Athletic Training, Audiology, Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Oral Health, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Physician, Podiatric Medicine, Psychology, Public Health (coming in March 2025), Respiratory Care, Social Work, Speech-Language Pathology, and Veterinary Medicine.

NAP strives to lead and exemplify interprofessional healthcare that promotes and preserves health and well-being, and supports affordable, accessible, and coordinated quality healthcare for all. We believe that healthcare practice that has an interprofessional foundation and addresses the whole person provides better health and preventive care. We also believe that to deliver care for the whole person, individuals need to feel safe when seeking health care and that access to care is available to all. As an organization, NAP's work and actions include four core values - interprofessional collaboration, patient-centeredness, inclusivity, and interconnectedness. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines interprofessional collaborative practice as "when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive services by working with patients, their families, carers [caregivers] and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings."

Access to healthcare is a fundamental human right. It is essential to promote equity, reduce health disparities, and support the well-being of not only individuals but also communities. Access to healthcare improves individual health outcomes while strengthening public health, fostering economic stability, and contributing to social justice. In our current societal climate, cost, lack of insurance, geographic location, and discrimination are barriers that prevent people from receiving necessary care. Governments, organizations, and societies must work together to remove these barriers and ensure that healthcare is accessible, affordable, and of high quality for all (CDC; Healthy People 2030; United Nations).

NAP's vision is to promote interprofessional healthcare that ensures affordable, accessible, and high-quality care for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, sex, disability status, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious identity, or residential location. NAP emphasizes the importance of healthcare that addresses holistic care, achieved through interprofessional collaboration among different healthcare professionals. The organization believes that this collaborative approach leads to better health outcomes, preventive care, and a healthcare system where individuals feel safe and have access to the care they need.

NAP is adopting a comprehensive and collaborative approach that addresses social and cultural factors that prioritize equity in the delivery of care. Guided by our core values, NAP advocates advancing these principles in the delivery of healthcare.

## References

Centers for Disease Control. "[Health Care Access.](#)" 2023.

Healthy People 2030. "[Access to Health Services.](#)" n.d.

United Nations. "[International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.](#)" Adopted 16 December 1966.

World Health Organization. "[Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice.](#)" 2010.

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