



**In-person**  
March 13-16, 2024

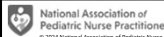
**Virtual**  
May - July 31, 2024

**45th National Conference  
on Pediatric Health Care**

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**Journey to Independent  
Practice**

Dr. Samantha Casselman, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner  
Happy Skin Pediatric Dermatology  
Phoenix, AZ



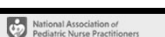
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Experts in pediatrics, Advocates for children.

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**Speaker Disclosure**

- None related to this presentation
- This content in this presentation is not exhaustive of the requirements to become an independent practitioner. The information presented in this presentation should be taken as personal experience and collegial recommendations.




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**Learning Objectives**

- Define the role of independent practice provider
- Recognize potential risks and benefits of owning your own practice
- State my personal experience in creating my independent practice

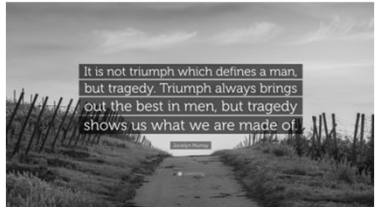


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**Why I chose  
independent  
practice?**

- 2020 loss
- 2021 realization
- 2022 time for a change
- 2023 a year of growth
- 2024 looking optimistic



It is not triumph which defines a man, but tragedy. Triumph always brings out the best in men, but tragedy shows us what we are made of.



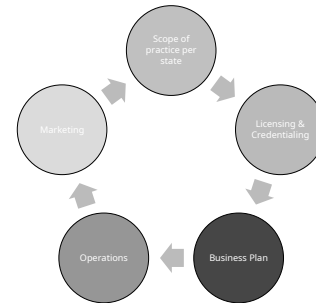
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## How to get started

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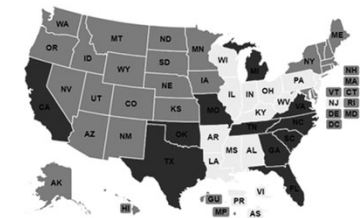
## Roadmap



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## Independent Practice by state



### Legend

Full Practice
Reduced Practice
Restricted Practice

<https://www.aanp.org/advice/state-practice-environment>

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## Requirements for NPs in AZ

- Valid RN license
- Apply for APRN license
- Complete and accredited nurse practitioner program
- Hold national certification respective to their specialty
- Maintain certification with certifying body requirements
- DEA for controlled substances



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## Setting up your business

- Form an LLC
- Register for an EIN with the IRS
  - Individual, S-corp or C-corp
- Determine your practice model
  - Brick and mortar
  - Telehealth
  - Hybrid model
- Search for an electronic medical record
- Malpractice insurance
- Set-up a business checking account
- Submit U.S. Beneficial Ownership (<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jv2015>)
- Transaction Privilege Tax (TPT) license if you will be selling product in your space (if applicable to your state)



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## Legal considerations

- Compliance with state regulations and scope of practice
- Maintain HIPPA
- Speak to a Healthcare Attorney (consider \$250-500/hr)
- Consent forms



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## Credentialing considerations

- Consider hiring credentialing specialists in your state
- Collect your contracts and fee schedule in early stages
- Create a group NPI and apply with the group if you plan to grow
- Consider an S-Corp if you plan to add more providers in the future
- CAQH provider data portal (required)
  - Allows healthcare entities to access your business information
- Availity Essentials
  - Real-time access to major insurance payers for claims and reimbursements



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## Making your practice your own

- Find your 'niche'
- Create your brand
- Start marketing
- Networking
- Create your processes and workflows
- Determine your team
- Build website



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## Office considerations

- CLIA waiver for lab processing
- Register with local labs
- Hazardous waste disposal
- Sharps waste disposal
- Medical waste pick-up
- Medical records shredding/disposal
- OSHA guidelines
- Emergency escape plans
- Compliance needs specific to your practice
- Protecting HPI
- Sick vs well areas
- Cleaning service



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## EHR considerations

- What do you need for your prescribing practices?
  - E-prescribe?
  - Android vs Apple compatibility for mobile apps
- Cost
  - Percentage per month or flat rate
- Customization
  - Done at the beginning and then difficult to get edits after go-live?
  - Able to make changes yourself?
- Embedded scheduling?
- HIPPA compliant platform for forms?
- Easy use for end-users (our patient families)
- Do they have a trial period or contract length you're comfortable with



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## Workflow considerations

- How many team members will you have
- Hire an MA, RN or do it yourself
- Is your EHR workflow heavily reliant on support staff
  - Do you have to sign-off on everything or you can be the sole provider
- Who will respond to your phone calls, texts, messages, pharmacy requests, prior authorizations
- Patient flow in clinic

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## Billing considerations

- What % will your EHR, billing specialist or clearinghouse take for your billed services
- What is your contracted rate for each CPT code?
- Will you collect \$ upfront or after sending the remittance to the insurance company?
- Will you check eligibility before appointments?
  - Co-pays
  - In-network vs out-of-network
  - Deductible amounts
- Which credit card vendor will you use?
- Consent to store credit card information
- Consent to bill insurance
- When will patients start receiving statements?
- What if a patient comes for an appointment and they have a large balance due?
- Will you send your patients to collections?

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## Challenges of NP Independent Practice

- Some insurance payers STILL require a supervising physician
- Resistance from some healthcare professionals
- Limited reimbursement rates for NPs compared to physician colleagues
- No longer have a provider network at your workplace
- Burden of being a business owner (we just want to help people!)
- Work-life balance

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## Potential costs

Initial start-up	Monthly expenses	Other considerations
Form an LLC \$75-300	EHR \$150-1000	Medical supplies
Malpractice insurance with general liability (yearly) \$1200-1500	Rent & cleaning service \$0-2500	Office supplies
Website development \$1000+	Phone line \$25	Office furniture/décor
Marketing \$1000+	Website maintenance \$50+	Membership dues and lack of CME funds
Attorney fees (contracts, consents, etc) \$250/hr	Internet \$250+	
Credentialing (\$150 per payer)	Staff ?	
	Compliance \$200+	

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## Continuing education and education resources in your clinic

- Attend conferences regularly
- Seek out special interest groups
- Utilize up-to-date resources
- Maintain relationships with APPs and physicians for referral or collaboration
- Create your own patient education materials (canva.com)
- Take advantage of adjunct faculty resources (if applicable)
  - VisualDX
  - UpToDate
  - Elsevier

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The graphic displays three patient education materials. On the left is a '21 DAY NEW HABIT CHART' with a sun icon and checkboxes for Monday through Sunday across three weeks. In the center is a 'Have a great day! Acne routine in the morning' card with steps: 'Wash face with Benzoyl Peroxide', 'Apply a moisturizer if you are dry', 'Apply clindamycin', and 'Apply SPF 30 or higher every 2 hours'. On the right is an 'Acne Routine at night' card with steps: '1. Wash face with a liquid cleanser and body of BP', '2. Moisturize', and '3. Apply Differin'. It also includes an optional step: 'optional: Toner or mask'.

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## Benefits of being in independent practice

- Improved access to care
- Personalized care
- Autonomy
- Work-life-balance

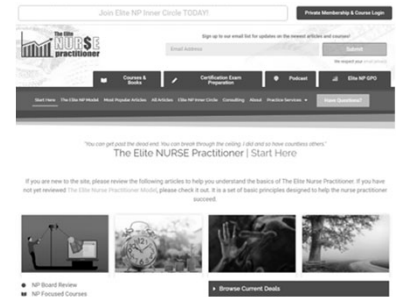


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## Resources to get started

- <https://elitenp.com/>
  - Blogs
  - Podcast
- <https://nphub.com/>
- <https://npbusiness.org/>



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## References

- American Association of Nurse Practitioners. State Practice Environment. Retrieved February 1, 2024 from <https://www.aanp.org/advocacy/state/state-practice-environment>

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