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## Barriers to CRNA Scope of Practice

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# **Catalysts and Barriers Influencing the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist Scope of Practice**

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**Background:** Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) are advanced practice nurses with an autonomous scope of practice (SOP), yet they are still limited by being forced to practice under physician supervision in many states.

**Objectives:** The goal of this study was to identify the catalysts, or driving forces, and barriers, or restraining forces influencing the CRNA SOP.

**Method:** An integrative literature review was used with an inclusion and exclusion criteria, focusing on journal articles published between 2013-2018.

**Results:** Seven studies met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Catalysts influencing the CRNA SOP were categorized into the themes of the need for CRNAs in select communities, physician shortages, and the economic benefits of CRNA utilization. Barriers or restraining forces affecting the CRNA SOP were categorized into the themes of impositions found in laws and policies at the state and hospital-level, and physician-centered restrictions.

**Conclusion:** Notable catalysts influencing the CRNA SOP were the needs of communities and cost-saving benefits of CRNA utilization. The most notable barrier was legislation at the federal, state, and hospital levels, resulting in the underutilization of CRNAs. By determining the barriers preventing CRNAs from exercising their full SOP, this literature review provides future direction for nursing research and the promotion of new policies aimed at removing these barriers.