



Arizona State Board of Nursing

4747 North 7th Street, Suite 200
Phoenix, AZ 85014-3655
Phone (602) 771-7800 Fax (602) 771-7888
E-Mail: arizona@azbn.gov
Home Page: <http://www.azbn.gov>

An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

OPINION: DUAL PROFESSION AND DUAL HEALTH CARE LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION (FORMERLY MULTIPLE LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION)

APPROVED: X

DATE: 5/91

REVISED DATE: 7/95, 11/95, 7/97, 10/99, 1/02, 9/21/05, 1/09

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:

SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

ADVISORY OPINION

DUAL PROFESSION AND DUAL HEALTH CARE LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

The Scope of Practice for the registered nurse (RN) and the licensed practical nurse (LPN) is determined by the Arizona Nurse Practice Act. No matter what additional roles the nurse undertakes, the licensee will be held to the standards of practice for their license, even if they are dually licensed/certified or if they assume roles that are different than their current license classification.

Dual Professions: A professional or practical nurse who holds other professional licenses or certification (i.e. Attorney, CPA, Architect, etc.) must at all times adhere to the statutes and rules pertaining to each profession. Such a person may not circumvent discipline for violating the law governing one license or certificate by claiming to have been acting under authority of any other license or certificate.

Dual Health Care Licensure/Certification: A nurse may hold dual licensure/certification. The nurse is held to the standard of the highest nursing credential, (i.e. an RN remains an RN and the LPN remains an LPN even if working in a position that does not require that level of credential). A professional, practical, or advanced practitioner who has acquired or developed a specialized knowledge base, (e.g., complimentary/integrative therapies, P.A., licensed midwife), will be held to the standard of care for the nursing credential, within the job description and liability limit of the employer.

Rationale: In light of numerous alternative and complementary therapies and increasing level of nursing licensure/certification, the Arizona State Board of Nursing acknowledges that there are times a nurse may be asked to assume a role that does not use all of the education and skills of their licensure/certification, they will be held to the standard of care for the highest credential held.

Clarifying Points: Nurses certified as a NP but employed as an RN would function within the job description of an RN. However, their knowledge level may give them the ability to do a more in depth assessment. But if employed as an RN for example, the N.P. would not utilize prescribing and dispensing privileges or discharge the patient.

An RN employed by a facility may be asked to fill in a shift because they are short an LPN. The RN would complete the assignment functioning as an RN.

RN's volunteering in the role of EMT complies with the requirements for certification of the Division of EMS. Should the skills of an RN be required, a base physician's order would be required.

Licensed/Certified health care providers may perform care for their family member that is outside of their scope of practice if instruction/training is received from a licensed care giver.

References:

Arizona Nurse Practice Act, ARS 32-1601 (12) (g), ARS 32-1601 (13) (m), R 4-19-401 (3), R 4-19-402 (1).

2001 online Journal of Issues in Nursing, state Boards of Nursing and Scope of Practice of Registered Nurses Performing Complementary Therapies; August 31, 2001

Virginia Board of Nursing Guidance Document #90-4 Service on a Volunteer Rescue Squad, 11/18/03.

California Board of Nursing: Dual Licensure, 2/99.