



Arizona State Board of Nursing

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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: PREHOSPITAL NURSING
APPROVED: X
DATE: 9/88
REVISED DATE: 7/95, 1/02, 3/03, 1/08, 9/11
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice X RN LPN

ADVISORY OPINION PRE HOSPITAL NURSING

The Pre-hospital nurse provides care in first responder and inter-facility transport situations which are under the aegis of the Emergency Medical System and a base hospital/physician.

It is within the Scope of Practice of a Registered Nurse (RN) to provide nursing care within the pre-hospital environment if the following requirements are met:

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. The pre-hospital nurse must be contracted through an employer/agency with a base hospital/medical director.
- B. The pre-hospital nurse provides nursing care, and functions under the direction of an administrative base hospital/medical director through policies, procedures, medical protocols and/or standing orders to maintain appropriate and effective levels of care for the patient.
- C. Only nurses who have completed additional pre-hospital education provided in a program of study with supervised clinical practice and competency verification/documentation are qualified to practice in the pre-hospital setting.
- D. All pre-hospital nurses must have current certification appropriate to patient population such as Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) / Pediatric Advance Life Support (PALS) or Emergency Nurse Pediatric Course (ENPC) / Trauma Nurse Care Course (TNCC) or Advance Trauma Nurse Course (ATNC) or Transport Nurse Advanced Trauma Certification (TNATC) / Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP).
- E. Competency-based skills, recognized by the administrative base hospital/medical director, are updated annually and verification documents kept on file with the employer/base hospital.
- F. It is strongly recommended for nurses regularly employed/working in the pre-hospital environment to obtain/maintain Certified Transport Registered Nurse (CTRN) or Certified Flight Registered Nurse (CFRN) certification.

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

The education and training of a Registered Nurse (RN) in the pre-hospital environment goes beyond the knowledge base of the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Intermediate Emergency Medical Technician (IEMT), and Certified Emergency Paramedic (CEP). A pre-hospital nurse curriculum builds on general nursing knowledge and experience and proceeds

with further specialized knowledge, skills, qualifications, and clinical competencies in specific areas.

The Board of Nursing and Department of Health Services recognize the following guideline for obtaining the knowledge and training for pre-hospital nursing.

The educational curriculum is administered or obtained through an education department or entity and is taught by qualified instructors.

The Course of Instruction is to include but not limited to:

- A. Anatomy and physiology of medical disease and trauma processes of body systems.
- B. Assessment treatment and evaluation of interventions.
- C. Procedures for initiation of or provision of additional life support therapies or interventions.
- D. Documentation.
- E. Pharmacology.
- F. Extrication techniques.
- G. Invasive/non-invasive techniques and interventions.
- H. Field radio and telemetry communication.
- I. Scene Control and safety guidelines.
- J. Patient stabilization procedures.
- K. Transportation of patients.
- L. Triage and disaster management.
- M. Agencies, law and rules governing the pre-hospital environment.
- N. Hazardous materials/hazardous conditions.
- O. Infection control guidelines.
- P. Use of specialized equipment for the transport environment.
- Q. Nursing Care responsibilities.

III. RATIONALE

The pre-hospital environment is a recognized specialty area requiring additional specialty training above and beyond what is traditionally provided in a basic nursing program. A pre-hospital nurse curriculum builds on general nursing knowledge and experience and proceeds with further specialized knowledge, skills, qualifications and clinical competencies in specific areas. Registered nurses generally are not certified as Emergency Medical Technician's (EMTs) or paramedics. However, with additional specialty education, Registered Nurses (RNs) are qualified to practice in the pre-hospital arena with appropriate Medical Direction. These nurses have acquired training and skill in such areas as caring for unstable neonates, high risk obstetrical patients, seriously ill and injured adults and children having potential life threatening conditions. This practice is within the scope of a Registered Nurse.

IV. REFERENCES

Air and Surface Transport Nurses Association. (2010). *Role of the registered nurses in the prehospital environment*. Position paper. Retrieved from www.astna.org/documents/RoleoftheRNintheOut-of-HospitalEnvironment.pdf

Emergency Nurses Association/National Flight Nurses Association (2008). *Role of the registered nurse in the pre-hospital environment*. Position statement. Retrieved from www.ena.org/sitecollectiondocuments/position%statements/preshospital_ems_-_ena_ps.pdf

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