



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: PREHOSPITAL NURSING
APPROVED: X NOT APPROVED:
DATE: 9/88
REVISED DATE: 1/91, 7/95, 1/02, 3/03; 1/08
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

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 function 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 an approved training program with supervised clinical practice and competency verification/documentation, are qualified to practice in the pre-hospital setting (i.e. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)) certification or pre-hospital nursing course.
- D. Those nurses who are not regularly employed by an agency as a pre-hospital nurse, but are performing in a role such as volunteer Emergency Medical Services (EMS), should complete and maintain pre-hospital nursing/ Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training up to the skill level of their performance.
- E. All pre-hospital nurses must have 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) certification appropriate to Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) patient populations.

- F. 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.
 - G. It is strongly recommended for nurses regularly employed/working in the pre-hospital environment to obtain/maintain Certified Transport Registered Nurse (CTRN) certification.
- II. 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 be 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.

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. 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.

REFERENCES

Cummings, R. O. (Ed.) (2001) Advanced cardiac life support provider manual. Dallas: American Heart Association.

Chameides L., & Hazinski M.F. (Eds.) (1997) Pediatric advanced life support. Dallas: American Heart Association.

Emergency Nurses Association (1995). National standard guidelines for pre-hospital nursing curriculum. Park Ridge, IL: Author.

Emergency Nurses Association/National Flight Nurses Association (1998). Role of the registered nurse in the pre-hospital environment: Position statement. Des Plaines, IL: Author.

Emergency Nurses Association (2000). Trauma nursing core course (provider) manual (5th Ed.). Des Plaines, IL: Author.

Semonin-Holleran, R. (1994). Pre-hospital nursing. St. Louis, MO: Mosby Yearbook.

Semonin-Holleran, R. (1996). Flight nursing: Principles & practices. (2nd Ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

Kentucky State Board of Nursing, 312 Wittington Parkway, Suite 300, Louisville, Kentucky