



## 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: ORDERS: ACCEPTING,  
TRANSCRIBING, SIGNING-OFF  
ORDERS**  
**DATE APPROVED: 03/87**  
**REVISED DATE: 5/94, 7/95, 10/96, 07/02, 3/06, 3/09**  
**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:  
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE**

### **ADVISORY OPINION ORDERS: ACCEPTING, TRANSCRIBING, REVIEWING ORDERS**

It is within the scope of practice of the registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN) to accept written orders from a person licensed in Arizona to prescribe diagnostic tests, medications and treatments. The RN or LPN may also accept verbal orders or telephone orders or electronic orders from a person licensed in this state, or their agent, provided the following standards are met:

#### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Non-written orders may be verbal, or electronically transmitted (including, but not limited to, telephone, email and fax,) to the nursing unit.
2. The licensed provider is identified and is known to have a relationship with the patient, even if the order is delivered by an agent of the provider.
3. The RN or LPN accepting the order retains the responsibility for knowing the accuracy and appropriateness of the order to maintain patient safety and must clarify any concerns with the licensed provider issuing the order. If the nurse perceives an order delivered by the agent of the provider to be incorrect, it may not be accepted until validated by the licensed provider.
4. Each agency has a written policy for the acceptance of non-written orders including the responsibilities of the RN or LPN and the responsibilities of the licensed provider for reviewing and verifying the orders within a specified timeframe.

#### **ACCEPTING**

Diagnostic tests, medication and treatment orders will be accepted handwritten, verbally, transmitted telephonically, electronically, or fax to nursing units. These orders shall be accepted only by registered nurses or licensed practical nurses.

- a. In acute hospital settings, if such orders are taken by a LPN, they shall be reviewed by a RN prior to implementation.
- b. In non-hospital settings, licensed practical nurses may take orders and do not require the signature of the RN. It is ultimately the responsibility of the supervising RN to assure that the LPN accepting orders and carrying out such does so in a safe and correct manner.
- c. When receiving verbal or telephone orders, the RN or LPN shall read back the order to the person giving the order to verify accuracy of receipt.
- d. Orders can be accepted from individuals whom the Licensed Health Care Provider (LHCP) has authorized to relay these orders. These orders will be documented as to the individuals' name/status and also the LHCP initiating the order/orders.

- e. The LHCP initiating the order is required to sign the order according to a timeframe as specified per facility policy.

### **TRANSCRIBING AND SIGN-OFF**

- a. Transcribing is the recording of orders and shall not be construed as accepting written, electronic, fax, verbal or telephone orders by clerical personnel. Only an RN or LPN may accept an order.
- b. Signing off constitutes a review of orders received for accuracy and appropriateness prior to implementation of orders and signature by the RN or LPN.
- c. In hospital settings, transcription of orders written, verbal, electronic, fax and telephone orders can be performed by clerical personnel, but must be reviewed and signed by a RN.
- d. In non-hospital settings, orders transcribed by clerical personnel shall be reviewed and signed by either a RN or LPN.

### **RATIONALE**

Accepting, transcribing and signing off on written orders for diagnostic test, medications and treatments is by education and tradition a part of the role of the role of the RN and LPN. However, in the expanding world of electronic communications including, but not limited to, telephone, email and fax, it is important to patient safety to have specific guidelines for accepting, transcribing and signing off on orders received electronically. This advisory opinion is expected to be used in concert with the policies developed by the health care agencies regarding the roles and responsibilities the licensed healthcare provider and the RN or LPN who will be accepting, transcribing and signing off on all orders.

### **REFERENCES**

A.R.S. § 32-1601 (11) (12) (13) (14) (15)

Arizona State Board of Nursing: Nurse Practice Act, R4-19-402.B

2009 National Patient Safety Goals: NPSG.02.01.01, retrieved January 31, 2009, from

[www.nursingsociety.org/Education/ContinuingEducation/Pages/FreeCE.aspx?utm\\_source=CTF0208&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=CTF](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Education/ContinuingEducation/Pages/FreeCE.aspx?utm_source=CTF0208&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CTF)