



## 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.

Within the Scope of Practice of  RN  LPN

**OPINION: SIGMOIDOSCOPY  
FLEXIBLE SCREENING  
APPROVED: X  
DATE: 1/90  
REVISED DATE: 3/95; 11/02, 1/10  
REVIEWED: 3/06  
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:  
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE**

### ADVISORY OPINION SIGMOIDOSCOPY: FLEXIBLE SCREENING

It is within the scope of practice of a Registered Nurse to perform flexible sigmoidoscopy for screening purposes, not diagnostic, if the following requirements are met:

#### I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. A written policy and procedures are maintained by the employer.
- B. Only Registered Nurses who have satisfactorily completed an agency's instructional program and have had supervised clinical practice are allowed to perform flexible sigmoidoscopy for screening purposes.
- C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of the instruction and supervised practice is on file with the employer.

#### II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION is to Include but not be limited to:

- A. Anatomy and physiology of the colon and abdomen.
- B. Indications and contraindications.
- C. Potential adverse reactions.
- D. Manipulation of the sigmoidoscope.
- E. Distinguishing between normal and abnormal findings and referring to appropriate physician.
- F. Nursing care responsibilities.

#### III. RATIONALE

Safety and accuracy of the routine flexible sigmoidoscopy screening by registered nurses is supported in current research and practice publications.

#### IV. REFERENCES

Els M. L. Verschuur, Ernst J. Kuipers, Peter D. Siersema. (2007). Nurses working in GI and endoscopic practice: a review. *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy* 65 (3), 469-479.

Guideline for performance of flexible sigmoidoscopy by registered nurses for the purpose of colorectal cancer screening. Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates. (2009)  
[www.sgna.org/Resources/flexiblesigmoidoscopyguideline0509.pdf](http://www.sgna.org/Resources/flexiblesigmoidoscopyguideline0509.pdf)