ADVISORY OPINION
DEBRIDEMENT, CONSERVATIVE SHARP WOUND

It is within the scope of practice for a Registered Nurse (RN) or a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to perform conservative sharp wound debridement of necrotic tissue if the following requirements are met.

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
A. Written policy and procedure are maintained by the agency/employer.
B. Only RNs and LPNs who have had supervised clinical practice and have satisfactorily completed an instructional program which may include, but is not limited to an accredited Enterostomal Therapy Nursing Education Program (ETNEP), wound management specialty course, or a CE-approved course in debridement are allowed to perform sharp wound debridement.
C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of an instructional program and demonstrated clinical proficiency are on file with the agency/employer.

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION is to include:
A. Anatomy/physiology of the integumentary system and the functional relationship of structures such as tendons, nerves and blood vessels.
B. Indications/Contraindications for sharp wound debridement.
C. Principles of wound healing and management.
D. Potential complications and adverse reactions of sharp wound debridement.
E. Technique of sharp wound debridement and return demonstration.
F. Nursing care responsibilities.

III. RATIONALE
RNs and LPNs with documented education and demonstrated proficiency in conservative sharp wound debridement can perform safe care for patients with full thickness wounds with necrotic tissue needing specialized wound care.
IV. REFERENCES


Other States with advisory opinion/position statements that support this advisory opinion:
Alaska Board of Nursing (1995)
Arkansas Board of Nursing, Sharp Wound Debridement (1997)
Delaware Board of Nursing, Conservative Sharp Wound Debridement (1995)
Maine Board of Nursing (1992)
Montana Board of Nursing, RN Sharp Debridement (1994)
Nebraska Board of Nursing, Wound Debridement (2000)
New Hampshire Board of Nursing (2011)
North Carolina Board of Nursing, Wound Care: Assessment and Debridement Position Statement for RN and LPN Practice (2009)
Oklahoma Board of Nursing, Wound Debridement by Licensed Nurses guideline (2011)