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OPINION: SUPERVISION OF UNLICENSED NURSE EXTERNS BY PROFESSIONAL NURSES

APPROVED DATE: 3/93

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ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:

EDUCATION LICENSURE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of X RN LPN

ADVISORY OPINION SUPERVISION OF UNLICENSED NURSE EXTERNS BY REGISTERED NURSES

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

It is within the scope of the Registered Nurse (RN) to supervise unlicensed Nurse Externs if the following requirements are met:

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Unlicensed Nurse Extern is defined as a student nurse currently enrolled in an accredited nursing program, in good standing, who has completed their first clinical rotation, OR a graduate from an accredited nursing program waiting to take NCLEX. After graduation they are eligible to remain or become a nurse extern as long as they are qualified to take the board exam or per individual facility policy.
- B. Written policies and procedures are maintained by the facility/employer.
- C. An RN may directly supervise an unlicensed Nurse Extern employed by a facility only if the Unlicensed Nurse Extern is currently enrolled in or a graduate of an accredited professional nursing program approved by the State Board of Nursing.
- D. An RN supervising an unlicensed Nurse Extern must be physically present on the same nursing unit and able to intervene in the care of the client.
- E. An RN supervising an unlicensed Nurse Extern must not permit the Nurse Extern to administer medications, parenteral fluids, blood products or IV flushes (with the exception of using saline flushes to start a peripheral-short IV catheter if competency has been demonstrated). Nurse Externs must not be permitted to adjust rates or pump devices.
- F. If the Nurse Extern has other educational training or background such as, but not limited to, Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), they can only function within the role of Nurse Extern and cannot perform skills or duties specific to other background or training.
- G. The unlicensed Nurse Extern, under the direct supervision of an RN, may perform other nursing skills for which they have received didactic and clinical instruction in their program including maintaining oxygen therapy. While under direct observation of the RN, the Nurse Extern may initiate, titrate and discontinue oxygen.

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION for the unlicensed Nurse Extern is to include but is not limited to:

- A. Basic data collection and documentation of client progress in the medical record.

- B. Observing, performing and documenting approved nursing procedures in the medical record including attending to clients' comfort needs and performing specific duties related to the assigned nursing unit as delegated by the RN and within the approved policies of the facility in which they are employed.
- C. The unlicensed Nurse Extern must show proof of having completed didactic instruction with clinical validation in fundamental nursing skills and satisfactory completion of at least one semester a professional nursing program.
- D. The unlicensed Nurse Extern must have received didactic and clinical instruction in IV therapy in order to participate in the insertion or discontinuation of peripheral-short IV catheters as well as IV dressing changes. Such skills must be validated and documented in accordance with the facility policy.

III. RATIONALE

To provide guidelines for the supervision of unlicensed nurse externs. The purpose of the externship is to enhance education and to facilitate the transition into the RN role while assuring safe and effective nursing care to clients.

IV. REFERENCES

- Arizona Nurse Practice Act. (2011). Arizona Professional and Practical Nursing Program R4-19-206. Retrieved from www.azbn.gov/NursePracticeAct.aspx
- Infusion Nurses Society. (2006). Infusion Nursing Standards of Practice. Retrieved from www.ins1.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=3310
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