

**Arizona State Board of Nursing
Substantive Policy Statement**

Expedited Therapy Prescribing and Dispensing for Nurse Practitioners

Approved January 25, 2008

This Substantive Policy Statement is advisory only. A Substantive Policy Statement does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal procedures of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on the regulated parties or include confidential information or rules made in accordance with the Arizona Administrative Procedures Act. If you believe that this Substantive Policy Statement does impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties you may petition the agency under Arizona Revised Statutes Section 41-1033 for a review of the statement. (ARS § 41-1091)

Notwithstanding A.C.C. R4-19-511 (D) (5) a registered nurse practitioner (RNP) with prescribing and dispensing privileges may prescribe antimicrobials to a person who is believed to be at substantial risk as a contact of a patient who has been examined and diagnosed with a communicable disease by the prescribing RNP.

Current language in R4-19-511 (D) (5) requires an examination of a person before prescribing a medication except in cases of emergency. It is consistent with current practice recommendations that persons at high risk for exposure to certain communicable diseases such as pertussis, meningitis, influenza, sexually transmitted diseases, scabies, plague, and Haemophilu influenza type b, receive immediate preventative treatment prior to a clinical diagnosis in order to prevent infection and ongoing transmission. Between 2004 and 2006 there was a 36% increase in chlamydia, a 38% increase in gonorrhea, and a 240% increase in pertussis. This constitutes a public health emergency and consideration of exceptions to the current rule. Expedited therapy can prevent major outbreaks of communicable diseases in populations and significant health manifestations in individuals.

The RNP may prescribe for contacts of infected persons even if the contact is not in the population of the RNP's specialty area. For example a pediatric nurse practitioner may prescribe for adult contacts of pertussis or a nurse midwife may prescribe to the male partner of an infected patient. However the infected patient must be within the RNPs scope of practice for the specialty area. All prescriptions must be issued in conformance with recognized standards of care and in recommended dosages.