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Opinion Name: APRN CLINICALS BY OUT OF STATE PROGRAMS  
Approved Date: 3/23/2018  
Revised Date: 3/2018  
Originating Committee: EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### ADVISORY OPINION:

## ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAMS CLINICALS IN ARIZONA BY OUT-OF-STATE PROGRAMS

**Background Information:** All currently approved APRN Distance Programs are published on the AZBN website in the Education Section Approved Nursing Programs.

Prior to 2009, all programs interested in offering a distance APRN program to AZ RNs were required to submit a full application and self study for Board approval consideration. In 2009, the AZ Board of Nursing proposed and received approval for an exemption for certain out-of-state APRN programs for clinicals only, and only if specifically approved by the program's home state Board of Nursing (not another agency or accrediting organization, and does not apply if the home state Board of Nursing does not approve APRN nursing programs).

This exemption is fully explained in this Advisory Opinion, below, and is not a change in law or policy, but rather is guidance to assist programs in understanding the limited exemption.

### I. PURPOSE:

Clarification of requirements and process for out-of-state Advanced Practice Registered Nursing ("APRN") programs that intend to supervise clinical patient experiences for the program's APRN students in Arizona.

### II. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

The Arizona Nurse Practice Act generally requires APRN programs operating in Arizona to be approved by the Arizona State Board of Nursing ("Board"), as described in Arizona Revised Statutes ("A.R.S.") §32-1644 and Arizona Administrative Code ("A.A.C.") Rule 4-19-501 – 504.

### III. EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN OUT-OF-STATE APRN PROGRAMS, FOR CLINICALS ONLY:

A.R.S. § 32-1631(7) exempts out-of-state APRN programs from the general Board approval requirement for “practice” by enrolled students under certain conditions:

**A.R.S. § 32-1631. Acts and persons not affected by chapter**

*This chapter does not prohibit:*

- 7. Registered nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist practice by duly enrolled students under competent supervision as part of a registered nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist program if the program is approved by a United States nursing regulatory agency in the state of the parent institution and the student is authorized to practice registered nursing in this state.*

Simply put, if an APRN program that is located outside of Arizona is approved by another state Board of Nursing (“BON”), its enrolled APRN student, who is licensed to practice nursing in Arizona, may engage in the program’s clinical patient care experiences in Arizona, under the competent supervision of the program, without a requirement to obtain Board approval.

**Important:** This exemption does not apply simply because a program has obtained accreditation from a regional or national accreditation organization. The exemption is specific to approval by the home state BON, only. Similarly, if the program’s home state uses a state agency other than a BON to approve nursing programs, such as a Board of Education, the exemption does not apply and program must obtain approval from the Arizona Board.

The APRN program’s preceptor or clinical instructor who is supervising students in Arizona must also be licensed to practice in Arizona. (*See, e.g.* A.R.S. §§ 32-1666 and 1667.)

This exemption does not apply to APRN didactic education, or APRN programs that are not approved by another state’s BON. Programs that do not meet the exemption criteria, or instruction that exceeds clinical practice, require Board approval through the normal APRN program approval process.

The exemption also does not affect the Board’s normal approval process for APRN distance learning programs.

#### **IV. RATIONALE & CONCLUSION**

Out-of-state APRN programs that are not approved in Arizona may offer clinicals for patient care experiences in Arizona without obtaining Board approval, under the following conditions:

1. The program is approved by the BON in its home state.
2. The student is enrolled in the program.
3. The program provides “competent supervision.”
4. Both the student and instructor are properly licensed/certified by the Board to practice their applicable level of nursing in Arizona.
5. The extent of instruction by Arizona-licensed preceptors, for the out-of-state program, is limited to clinical patient care experiences, and does not include didactic teaching.
6. Program faculty who are not licensed to practice in Arizona do not provide instruction in Arizona. This includes, but is not limited to, providing clinical supervision, directing patient care, or communicating with patients.

This Advisory Opinion is consistent with historic and current practice in Arizona, which has been to permit out-of-state APRN programs to conduct clinical patient care experiences in Arizona without requiring Board approval of the program, under the conditions listed, above.

The Board encourages any programs that have questions regarding these requirements to contact Board staff for additional information. A staff directory is located at the Board's website, [www.azbn.gov](http://www.azbn.gov), along with a list of all approved programs.

## **V. REFERENCES**

The Arizona Nurse Practice Act (A.R.S. §§ 32-1601 – 1669, Rules 4-19-101 - 815); and specifically, A.R.S. §§ 32-1631(7), 1644, 1666, and 1667; and A.A.C. Rules 501-504.