

February 24, 1992

Nita R. Little, RN
Director of Nursing Service
100 S. Spruce Street
Vivian, LA 71082

RE: Nursing Practice Opinion

Dear Ms. Little:

Your request for an opinion of the Board of Nursing regarding registered nurses determining if an emergency room patient has an "emergency medical condition" was presented to the Board at its meeting on February 21, 1992.

The Nursing Practice Committee had reviewed all of the information you sent and had reviewed additional relevant literature. At the February 21 meeting, the Committee presented its recommendation to the Board. After due deliberation, the Board adopted the following opinion:

In reference to Agenda Item # 4.2, it is not in accord with the Nurse Practice Act for the registered nurse to triage patients for the purpose of determining if an emergency medical condition exists or directing the patient to seek medical care elsewhere.

A preliminary medical diagnosis will have to be made prior to this determination. The Louisiana Nurse Practice Act, specifically L.R.S. 37:913 (3), prohibits registered nurses from engaging in acts of medical diagnosis.

If you have questions about this matter, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. Morvant, MN, RN
Executive Director

BLM:sll

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