

Louisiana State Board of Nursing
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June 16, 2005

Lisa M. Deaton, RN, BSN
Manager, Health Standards Section
LA Department of Health and Hospitals
P.O. Box 3767
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3767

Dear Ms. Deaton:

Your request for clarification of Nurse Practice Opinion (npop) 93.22 regarding application and/or delegation of the application of the Unna Boot was presented to the Nursing Practice Committee on April 27, 2005. After due deliberation, the committee recommended the following revision of the previous opinion.

That in reference to agenda item 6.2 and in accordance with LRS 37:913(14)(1) that it is within the scope of practice for a registered nurse to apply compression therapy (Unna Boot), provided said nurse has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities. This is a complex task which may be delegated to Licensed Practical Nurses in all settings based on compliance with LAC 46:XLVII.3703. *Delegating Nursing Interventions as follows:*

Delegating Nursing Interventions—entrusting the performance of selected nursing tasks by the registered nurse to other competent nursing personnel in selected situations. The registered nurse retains the accountability for the total nursing care of the individual. The registered nurse is responsible for and accountable to each consumer of nursing care for the quality of nursing care he or she receives, regardless of whether the care is provided solely by the registered nurse or by the registered nurse in conjunction with other licensed or unlicensed assistive personnel.

The registered nurse shall assess the patient care situation which encompasses the stability of the clinical environment and the clinical acuity of the patient, including the overall complexity of the patient's health care problems. This assessment shall be utilized to assist in determining which tasks may be delegated and the amount of supervision which will be required.

- a. Any situation where tasks are delegated should meet the following criteria:
 - i. the person has been adequately trained for the task;
 - ii. the person has demonstrated that the task has been learned;
 - iii. the person can perform the task safely in the given nursing situation;
 - iv. the patient's status is safe for the person to carry out the task;
 - v. appropriate supervision is available during the task implementation;
 - vi. the task is in an established policy of the nursing practice setting and the policy is written, recorded and available to all.
- b. The registered nurse may delegate to licensed practical nurses the major part of the nursing care needed by individuals in stable nursing situations, i.e., when the following three conditions prevail at the same time in a given situation:
 - i. nursing care ordered and directed by R.N./M.D. requires abilities based on a

relatively fixed and limited body of scientific fact and can be performed by following a defined nursing procedure with minimal alteration, and responses of the individual to the nursing care are predictable; and

ii. change in the patient's clinical conditions is predictable; and

iii. medical and nursing orders are not subject to continuous change or complex modification.

c. In complex (unstable) situations, the registered nurse may utilize the expertise of the licensed practical nurse by delegating selected tasks. The registered nurse may not delegate the following nursing functions relative to intravenous medications and fluids:

i. administration of investigational drugs;

ii. administration of cancer therapeutic drugs;

iii. administration of medications by IV push, other than those defined by health agency protocol for emergency situations;

iv. administration of blood and blood products;

v. administration of total parenteral nutrition solutions;

vi. accessing the implanted device.

In situations where registered nurse supervision is unavailable or limited, such as in home health, the administration of intravenous medications and fluids may not be delegated.

The registered nurse is responsible for knowing the cause and effect of every medication (s)he administers personally or through delegation. Delegation carries with it the responsibility to ascertain the competence of persons to whom delegation is made. Since supervision of personnel associated with nursing functions and delegation of selected nursing functions are included in the legal definition of nursing, it is the responsibility of the registered nurse to ascertain the competency of the persons to whom (s)he delegates the administration of medication.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this communication.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. Morvant, MN, RN
Executive Director
Louisiana State Board of Nursing

BLM/cdm

Npop 05.06