

Louisiana State Board of Nursing

Mrs. Margie D. Gibbs, R.N.
President

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Miss Merlyn M. Maillian, R.N.
Executive Director

December 6, 1984

(Mrs.) Betty Penton, R.N.
Director of Nursing Service
West Calcasieu-Cameron Hospital
P.O. Drawer J
Sulphur, LA 70663

Dear Mrs. Penton:

On November 30, 1984, the Board of Nursing deliberated on the questions you asked regarding the legal definition of the practice of a registered nurse. The opinion of the Board on each of your questions follows:

1. Changing tracheostomy tubes in a hospital situation: In an emergency a registered nurse who has the appropriate knowledge and skills may change the tracheostomy tube.

84.10 In non-emergency situations, a registered nurse should assess the patient and use nursing judgment, based on his/her competency, as to whether or not (s)he will carry out an order or perform a procedure.

Considering the possible complications of the procedure, the nurse must be adequately prepared to intervene in the event of any complication.

2. Administration of Pentothal: Except for registered nurses who are covered under L.R.S. 37:930, it is not within the realm of the legal practice of the registered nurse to administer pentothal to a patient.

84.11 The monitoring of the patient having received pentothal for purposes other than anesthesia (analgesia, sedation, etc.) is within the realm of the legal practice of a registered nurse.

If I can further assist you in nursing practice matters, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sister Lucie Leonard

Sister Lucie Leonard, R.N.
Nursing Practice Consultant

SLL:hj

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