

January 28, 1988

Kathleen S. Crocker, RN, MSN, CNSN  
Director of Nursing  
New England Critical Care, Inc.  
165 Forest Street  
Marlborough, Massachusetts 01752

Dear Ms. Crocker:

Your request for a declaratory statement on specific scope of practice questions regarding a registered nurse providing nursing care at home to patients who receive low dose anesthetic agents for analgesia was presented to the Board of Nursing at its meeting on Friday, January 22, 1988. The Board members had received copies of your initial correspondence prior to the meeting, and the second mailing you sent was made available to them at the meeting.

The Board took notice of Section 930 of the Louisiana Nurse Practice Act which states, in part, "No registered professional nurse shall administer any form of anesthetic to any person under their care unless the following conditions are met:" (which conditions include graduation from an accredited school of anesthesia and current A.A.N.A. certification). Subsection D of Section 930 provides an exception for registered nurses to administer topical anesthetic agents and local anesthetic agents "under the skin," (such as anesthetizing an IV site), but this clause continues: "however, this provision shall not permit a registered nurse to administer local anesthetics perineurally, peridurally, epidurally, intrathecally or intravenously. This subsection shall not be applicable to certified registered nurse anesthetists provided for in 37:930 (A).

After due deliberation, the Board adopted the following opinion:

.02

In reference to agenda item 10b, it is not within the realm of practice for a registered nurse providing nursing care to home bound patients to administer intraspinal doses of anesthetic agents for analgesia unless said registered nurse is a certified registered nurse anesthetist.

You may recall that, in my previous correspondence, I told you that the Board had previously adopted a declaratory statement (opinion) which provides that a registered nurse who has the necessary knowledge and skills may administer analgesic agents via an epidural catheter. The Board took notice of this previous pinion and indicated that analgesic agents may be administered in your situation. The administration of anesthetic agents is reserved to the C.R.N.A.

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

Sincerely,

Sister Lucie Leonard, MSN, RN  
Nursing Practice Consultant