

June 1, 1992

Michael A. Garcia, Manager
Health Standards Section
DHH/OS/Health Services Financing
1201 Capital Access Road/E
P.O. Box 3767
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3767

RE: Nursing Practice Opinion

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Your request for an opinion of the Board of Nursing regarding a registered nurse delegating respiratory care functions to unlicensed persons in a community home situation was presented to the Board at its meeting on May 22, 1992.

The Nursing Practice Committee appreciated the detailed information you sent to clarify the issue. The members of the Committee had reviewed all of the information you sent and had discussed the matter with you by telephone during the Committee meeting. At the May 22 meeting, the Committee presented its recommendation to the Board. After due deliberation, the Board adopted the following opinion:

In reference to Agenda Item 4.4, the registered nurse may delegate routine respiratory care functions such as postural drainage, percussion, suctioning of the pharynx and of a well-healed, mature tracheostomy to unlicensed persons in a community home in accordance with LAC 46:XLVII.3703.A.12.a and d (administrative rules on delegation to unlicensed persons), which state:

- 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.

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- 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.
- d. Contingent upon the registered nurse's evaluation of each patient's condition. and also upon the registered nurse's evaluation of the competency of each unlicensed nursing personnel, registered nurses may delegate non-complex tasks to unlicensed nursing personnel.
- i. A non-complex task is one that can safely be performed according to exact directions, with no need to alter the standard procedure, and the results are predictable.
 - ii. A complex task is one that requires judgment to safely alter the standard procedure in accordance with the needs of the patient; or requires the consideration of a number of factors in order to perform the procedure; or requires judgment to determine how to proceed from one step to the next.
 - iii. The administration of medications is a complex task because it requires the consideration of number of factors and the formulation of judgments according to those factors.

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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