

Scope of Nursing Practice Decision-Making Framework

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In early 2015, the Tri-Council for Nursing, consisting of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the American Nurses Association (ANA), the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), and the National League for Nursing (NLN), in collaboration with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) determined that a uniform tool (scope of practice decision-tree) was needed. Representatives from the ANA, NLN, and Boards of Nursing, along with NCSBN staff, had would assist nurses and their employers in determining the responsibilities a nurse can safely perform. Upon examination

FIGURE 1

Scope of Nursing Practice Decision-making Framework

Identify, describe, or clarify the activity, intervention, or role under consideration.

Is the activity, intervention, or role prohibited by the NPA and rules/regulations or any other applicable laws, rules/regulations, or accreditation standards or professional nursing scope and standards?



for all licensed nurses in all settings with respect to their education, role, function, and accountability within the scope of nursing practice. It will assist nurses, including direct care nurses, in navigating current nursing practice with all of its challenges. As practice transforms, licensed nurses need to communicate any ongoing-issues/concerns to their BONs so that regulators can evaluate whether changes to the NPA, rules/regulations, or standards need to be considered.

Targeted Population

The population for which this framework was devised includes all licensed nurses (LPN/VN, RN, and APRN) at all experience levels (novice to expert) in all practice settings and in all roles such as:

- Direct care nurses
- Nurse managers
- Nurse administrators
- Nurse educators
- Nurse researchers
- Nurse regulators
- Nurse policymakers

Context for Use

To promote safety of patients, nurses would use this framework to:

- Determine individual accountability for practice decisions
- Communicate with other health care professionals regarding the scope of nursing practice and the nurse's accountability
- Inform health care and other employing organizations about the scope of nursing practice and nursing accountability
- Educate nursing students about their accountability for practice decisions
- Guide professional nursing organizations, and credentialing and regulatory agencies in the formulation of scope and standards of practice, policy, and position statements.

Key Definitions