

KENTUCKY BOARD OF NURSING
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ADVISORY OPINION STATEMENT

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS FOR SEDATION BY NURSES

Introduction

The Kentucky Board of Nursing is authorized by Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) Chapter 314 to regulate nurses, nursing education and practice, and to issue advisory opinions on nursing practice, in order to assure that safe and effective nursing care is provided by nurses to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The Kentucky Board of Nursing issues advisory opinions as to what constitutes safe nursing practice. As such, an opinion is not a regulation of the Board and does not have the force and effect of law. It is issued as a guideline to licensees who wish to engage in safe nursing practice, and to facilitate the delivery of safe, effective nursing care to the public.

Accountability and Responsibility of Nurses

KRS 314.021(2) holds nurses individually responsible and accountable for rendering safe, effective nursing care to clients and for judgments exercised and actions taken in the course of providing care.

KRS 314.021(2) imposes individual responsibility upon nurses. Acts which are within the permissible scope of practice for a given licensure level may be performed only by those licensees who personally possess the education and skill proficiency to perform those acts in a safe, effective manner.

Nursing practice should be consistent with the *Kentucky Nursing Laws*, established standards of practice, and be evidence based.

Advisory Opinion

The Board has received multiple inquiries as to whether the intravenous administration of pharmacological agents for sedation is within the scope of nursing practice. After review of the statutes governing nursing practice, curricula of prelicensure and continuing education nursing programs, standards of nursing practice, and study of the issues and concerns regarding the administration of intravenous medication for sedation, the Kentucky Board of Nursing issued this advisory opinion modeled in part from the Position Statement on the "Role of the Registered Nurse (RN) in the Management of Patients Receiving IV Conscious Sedation for Short-Term

Therapeutic, Diagnostic, or Surgical Procedures" as published in the Association of Operating Room Nurses (AORN) Journal, Volume 55, No. 1, January 1992. In addition, nurses are referred to the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses, (p.k.a. AORN) "Recommended Practices for Managing the Patient Receiving Moderate Sedation/Analgesia," (Effective January 1, 2002).

A. Administration, Management and Monitoring by Registered Nurses

It is within the scope of registered nursing practice to manage the care of patients receiving IV sedation during therapeutic, diagnostic, or surgical procedures provided the following criteria are met:

1. Administration of IV sedation medications by non-anesthetist RNs is allowed by institutional policy, procedures, and protocol.
2. An attending physician/provider selects and orders the medications to achieve IV sedation.
3. Guidelines for patient monitoring, drug administration, and protocols for dealing with potential complications or emergency situations are available and have been developed in accordance with accepted standards of practice.
4. The registered nurse managing the care of the patient receiving IV sedation shall have no other responsibilities that would leave the patient unattended or compromise continuous monitoring.
5. The registered nurse managing the care of patients receiving IV sedation is able to:
 - a. Demonstrate the acquired knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, cardiac arrhythmia recognition and complications related to IV sedation and medications.
 - b. Assess total patient care requirements during IV sedation and recovery. Physiologic measurements should include, but not be limited to, respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, blood pressure, cardiac rate and rhythm, and patient's level of consciousness.
 - c. Understand the principles of oxygen delivery, respiratory physiology, transport and uptake, and demonstrate the ability to use oxygen delivery devices.
 - d. Anticipate and recognize potential complications of IV sedation in relation to the type of medication being administered.
 - e. Possess the requisite knowledge and skills to assess, diagnose and intervene in the event of complications or undesired outcomes and to institute nursing interventions in compliance with orders (including standing orders) or institutional protocols or guidelines.
 - f. Demonstrate skill in airway management resuscitation.
 - g. Demonstrate knowledge of the legal ramifications of administering IV sedation and/or monitoring patients receiving IV sedation, including the RN's responsibility and in the event of an untoward reaction or life-threatening complication.

6. The institution or practice setting has in place an educational/competency validation mechanism that includes a process for evaluating and documenting the individual's demonstration of the knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the management of patients receiving IV sedation. Evaluation and documentation of competence occurs on a periodic basis according to institutional policy.

B. Additional Guidelines

1. Intravenous access must be continuously maintained in the patient receiving IV sedation.
2. All patients receiving IV sedation will be continuously monitored throughout the procedure, as well as the recovery phase by physiologic measurements including, but not limited to, respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, blood pressure, cardiac rate and rhythm, and patient's level of consciousness.
3. Supplemental oxygen will be immediately available to all patients receiving IV sedation and administered per order (including standing orders).
4. An emergency cart with a defibrillator must be immediately accessible to every location where IV sedation is administered. Suction and a portable positive pressure breathing device, oxygen, and appropriate airways must be in each room where IV sedation is administered.
5. Provisions must be in place for the immediate availability of personnel who are experts in airway management, emergency intubation, and advanced cardiopulmonary resuscitation if complications arise.

Further, the Board issued the following advisory opinions:

While the registered nurse who administers intravenous sedation is acting on a specific medical order for a specific client, the registered nurse has the right and obligation to refuse to administer and/or continue to administer medication(s) in amounts that may induce anesthesia and/or loss of consciousness.

The administration of IV medication for procedural sedation is not within the scope of licensed practical nursing practice. (See 201 KAR 20:490 Licensed practical nurse intravenous scope of practice.)

The administration of medications producing general anesthesia, or given for the purpose of general anesthesia, and the monitoring of patient's responses to such medications are within the scope of practice of the APRN, designated nurse anesthetist. The administration of regional anesthesia and the monitoring of the patient responses to such medications are within the scope of practice of the APRN who is educationally prepared and clinically competent in the performance of the procedures. The intravenous administration of medications for the purpose of anesthesia is not within the scope of registered nursing or licensed practical nursing practice.

The administration of Nitrous Oxide for sedation is within the scope of registered nursing practice for the registered nurse who is educationally prepared and clinically competent.

Determining Scope of Practice

In addition to this advisory opinion statement, the Kentucky Board of Nursing has published "Scope of Practice Determination Guidelines" which contains a decision tree chart providing guidance to nurses in determining whether a selected act is within an individual nurse's scope of practice now or in the future. A copy of the guidelines may be obtained from the Board office or downloaded from the Board's website at <http://kbn.ky.gov>.

Applicable Statutes¹

KRS 314.021(2) states:

All individuals licensed under provisions of this chapter shall be responsible and accountable for making decisions that are based upon the individuals' educational preparation and experience in nursing and shall practice nursing with reasonable skill and safety.

KRS 314.011(8) defines "advanced practice registered nursing practice" as:

... The performance of additional acts by registered nurses who have gained added knowledge and skills through an organized postbasic program of study and clinical experience and who are certified by the American Nurses' Association or other nationally established organizations or agencies recognized by the board to certify registered nurses for advanced nursing practice. The additional acts shall, subject to approval of the board, include but not be limited to prescribing treatment, drugs, devices, and ordering diagnostic tests. Advanced practice registered nurses who engage in these additional acts shall be authorized to issue prescriptions for and dispense nonscheduled legend drugs as defined in KRS 217.905 and to issue prescriptions for but not to dispense Schedules II through V controlled substances as classified in KRS 218A.060, 218A.070, 218A.080, 218A.090, 218A.100, 218A.110, 218A.120, and 218A.130, under the conditions set forth in KRS 314.042 and regulations promulgated by the Kentucky Board of Nursing on or before August 15, 2006. (a).... ...The performance of these additional acts shall be consistent with the certifying organization or agencies' scopes and standards of practice recognized by the board by administrative regulation.

KRS 314.011(6) defines "registered nursing practice" as:

...The performance of acts requiring substantial specialized knowledge, judgment, and nursing skill based upon the principles of psychological, biological, physical, and social sciences in the application of the nursing process in:

- a) The care, counsel, and health teaching of the ill, injured or infirm.
- b) The maintenance of health or prevention of illness of others.
- c) The administration of medication and treatment as prescribed by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse and as further authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with American Nurses' Association Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses. Components of medication administration include, but are not limited to:

¹ A copy of the *KENTUCKY NURSING LAWS* may be purchased from the Kentucky Board of Nursing office, or downloaded from the Board's web site at <http://kbn.ky.gov>

1. Preparing and giving medication in the prescribed dosage, route, and frequency, including dispensing medications only as defined in subsection (17)(b) of this section;
 2. Observing, recording, and reporting desired effects, untoward reactions, and side effects of drug therapy;
 3. Intervening when emergency care is required as a result of drug therapy;
 4. Recognizing accepted prescribing limits and reporting deviations to the prescribing individual;
 5. Recognizing drug incompatibilities and reporting interactions or potential interactions to the prescribing individual; and
 6. Instructing an individual regarding medications.
- d) The supervision, teaching of, and delegation to other personnel in the performance of activities relating to nursing care.
- e) The performance of other nursing acts which are authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with American Nurses' Association Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses.

KRS 314.011(10) defines "licensed practical nursing practice" as:

...The performance of acts requiring knowledge and skill such as are taught or acquired in approved schools for practical nursing in:

- a) The observing and caring for the ill, injured, or infirm under the direction of a registered nurse, a licensed physician, or dentist.
- b) The giving of counsel and applying procedures to safeguard life and health, as defined and authorized by the board.
- c) The administration of medication or treatment as authorized by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse practitioner and as further authorized or limited by the board which is consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.
- d) Teaching, supervising, and delegating except as limited by the board.
- e) The performance of other nursing acts, which are authorized, or limited by the board and which are consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses' Standards of Practice or with Standards of Practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.

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