



Utilizing Interpretive Guidelines

The mission of the Ohio Board of Nursing is to actively safeguard the health of the public through the effective regulation of nursing care. To this end, the Board may develop Interpretive Guidelines regarding select nursing activities or procedures, not to announce a new policy, but to give licensees specific instruction regarding their obligations under existing law.

An Interpretive Guideline is not a regulation of the Board, and does not carry the force and effect of law. An Interpretive Guideline is adopted by the Board as a guideline to licensees who seek to engage in safe nursing practice.

Accountability and Responsibility of Registered Nurses

ORC 4723.01(B) defines the scope of practice for the registered nurse. Rule 4723-4-03, OAC holds registered nurses responsible for maintaining and demonstrating current knowledge, skills, abilities, and competence in rendering nursing care within their scope of practice. Each nurse is individually responsible and accountable for the individual's actions based upon the nurse's education, experience, and competency.

The registered nurse must apply the Nurse Practice Act (Chapter 4723, Ohio Revised Code) and rules regulating the practice of nursing (Chapters 4723-1 to 4723-27, Ohio Administrative Code) to the specific practice setting. Further, the registered nurse must utilize good professional judgment in determining whether or not to engage in a given patient-care related activity, consistent with the law, rules, and guided by the Board's Decision Making Model. It is critical to note that the law and rules require that the licensee provide nursing care only in circumstances that are consistent with one's education, experience, knowledge, and demonstrated competency.

General Information

The registered nurse providing care should maintain documentation of current education and competency, and ensure that practice is guided by the nurse's employing facility/institution's policies and procedures.

Employing Facility/Institution Policies and Procedures

The clinical policies and procedures established within the registered nurse's employing facility/institution provide support for nurses to safely perform nursing activities within that employment setting. When applicable, policies and procedures are often developed in conjunction with multiple providers or departments, and may incorporate evidence-based practice guidelines established by professional specialty organizations or national entities. Policies and procedures regarding a particular nursing activity or task might include, but are not limited to:

- a. Educational requirements relative to the nursing activity or task. Such requirements may include, but are not limited to education regarding anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, indications/contraindications to performing the nursing activity or task, potential adverse reactions, emergency nursing interventions, cognitive and psychomotor skills, monitoring modalities, relevant documentation requirements, patient/family total care needs;
- b. An educational and/or competency validation mechanism relevant to the particular nursing activity or task;
- c. Other requirements determined by the employing facility/institution.