

NURSE PRACTICE STANDARDS

FOR THE LICENSED PRACTICAL & LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE

“NURSE PRACTICE STANDARDS” for the LPN/LVN

“Nursing Practice Standards” for the Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse (LPN/LVN) is an avenue that NALPN meets the goals of its By-Laws to address Ethical and Principle Standards and to meet “Article II Objective” of the NALPN By-Laws as well, to explicate the Standards of Practical/Vocational Nursing. In our everchanging world, LPN’s and LVN’s have adjusted their practice to support those changes. As LPN’s/LVN’s practice in expanding roles in health care, “Nursing Practice Standards” are an imperative practice for LPN’s, LVN’s, as well as PN and VN students and their educators; all who practice with LPN’s and LVN’s.

PREFACE

The Standards of Practice were developed and incorporated by the NALPN Board of Directors to provide an essential benchmark to deliver the quality of health services, nursing care, and nursing services given by LPN’s/LVN’s which may be measured and assessed. These “Nurse Practice Standards” are applicable in all practice settings. The individual needs of the patient, the particular type of health care agency or other services, and the community resources, will vary according to the degree to which individual standards are applied.

The “Scope of Practice” of the Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse has extended into specialized nursing services. These specialized fields of nursing services are provided below.

CODE

The code for the Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse was incorporated by NALPN in 1961 with a revision in 1979. The code provides a motivation for establishing, maintaining, and elevating professional nurse standards. As set forth in this code, upon entering the profession, each LPN/LVN, has the responsibility to adhere to the standards of ethical practice and conduct.

Each are to:

1. Know the “Scope of Practice” to maximize utilization of the LPN/LVN, as specified by the Nursing Practice Act and function within this “Scope of Practice”.
2. Provide health care to all patients regardless of race, creed, cultural background, disease, or lifestyle.

3. In personal appearance, language, dress, and demeanor, uphold the highest standards.
4. Accept the responsibility for safe nursing by keeping mentally and physically fit and up to date educationally to practice safely.
5. Stay informed about issues affecting the practice of nursing, the delivery of health care. Where appropriate, participate in government and policy decisions.
6. Accept responsibility of membership of NALPN, participate to maintain the “Nurse Practice Standards”, and employment of policies which lead to quality patient care.
7. Safeguard confidential information about the patient acquired from any source.

SCOPE

Licensed Practical Nurses/Licensed Vocational Nurses are a specialized field who represent the entry into the nursing practice profession. Practicing in places exists where different professions unite in their particular skills in a team effort. This effort is set to improve a patient’s function and to protect the health and safety of the patients. Career advancement opportunities are present within the profession academic education, expansion of knowledge, expertise through both academic/continuing education and certification.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

The “Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse”

1. Shall complete an educational program approved by the state nursing authority in practical nursing.
2. Shall successfully pass the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses.
3. Shall participate in the employing institution an initial orientation.

LEGAL & ETHICAL

The “Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse”

1. Shall recognize and have a commitment to meet the moral and ethical practice of nursing obligations.
2. Shall not perform or accept professional responsibilities/duties which (s)he knows is not competent to perform.
3. Shall take responsibility in actions should situations arise where there is unprofessional conduct by a peer or other health care provider.

4. Shall hold a current LPN/LVN license to practice nursing in accordance with the law of their employment state.
5. Shall know and practice the scope of nursing practice instated by the Nursing Practice Act in their employment state.
6. Shall have a personal commitment to conform to the legal responsibilities essential for good nursing practice.

PRACTICE

The "Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse"

1. As an accountable member of the health care team; shall accept assigned responsibilities.
2. As related to the assigned duties; shall function within the limits of educational preparation and experience.
3. With other members of the health care team; shall function in promotion of and in maintenance of good health. Shall aide in preventing disease and disability. Shall care for and rehabilitate individuals who are experiencing an altered state of health. Shall contribute to the ultimate quality of life until death.
4. For the individual patient or group; shall know and utilize the nursing process in planning, implementing, evaluating.
 - a. Planning: The planning of nursing includes:
 - assessment and data collection of health status of the patient, the family, and community groups.
 - reporting information received from assessment.
 - identifying health goals.
 - b. Implementation: The plan for nursing care is put into practice to achieve the stated goals and this includes:
 - Observing, reporting and recording significant changes which require different goals or intervention.
 - Apply skills and nursing knowledge to help promote and maintain health, to help prevent disease and disability, and to optimize functional capabilities of a patient.
 - Encouraging self-care as appropriate and assisting the patient and family with activities of daily living.
 - Carrying out therapeutic protocols and regimens prescribed by personnel in conjunction to state law.

- c. Evaluations: The plan for nursing care and its implementations are evaluated to measure the progress toward the stated goals and will include appropriate person and/or groups to determine:
- The relevancy of current goals in relation to the progress of the patient.
 - The recipient's involvement of care in the evaluation process.
 - The nursing action quality in implementation of the plan.
 - New goal setting or changing priorities in the care plan.
 - Shall participate in peer review and other evaluation processes.
 - Shall participate in the development of policies concerning the health, nursing needs of society, and in the roles and functions of the LPN/LVN.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The "Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse"

1. Shall seek and participate in continuing education activities that are accredited and offered by the National Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (NALPN) or other accredited organizations.
2. Shall take advantage of continuing education and/or certification opportunities which will lead to professional development and personal growth.
3. Shall regularly review career goals and choose continuing education activities that help to achieve these goals.
4. Shall be responsible for maintaining the highest possible level of professional capacity at all times.

SPECIALIZED NURSING PRACTICE

The "Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse"

1. As set forth in this document, shall meet all standards of practice.
2. For practice in the chosen specialized nursing area, candidate shall present personal qualifications that demonstrate potential abilities.
3. At the staff level, shall have had at least one year nursing experience.
4. Shall provide documentation of completion of an approved agency course or program providing the knowledge and skills necessary for adequate nursing services in the specialized field.