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DELEGATION: NON-NURSING FUNCTIONS

Position Statement for RN and LPN Practice

Issue:

Technical tasks which support the care of clients and do not require the professional judgment of a licensed nurse (RN or LPN) are generally considered non-nursing activities and may be delegated by the licensed nurse to unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) as allowed by agency policy/procedures. Examples of activities are:

Laboratory functions, (blood glucose testing, phlebotomy),

EKG procedure,

Use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED),

Pulse oximetry,

Handing instruments/x-rays, and

Performing audiometric screening.

Tasks may be delegated to UAP which meet ALL of the following criteria:

1) Frequently recur in the daily care of a client or group of clients,
2) Are performed according to an established (standardized) sequence of steps,
3) Involve little or no modification from one client-care situation to another,
4) May be performed with a predictable outcome,
5) Do not inherently involve ongoing assessment, interpretation, or decision-making which cannot be logically separated from the procedure(s) itself,
6) Do not endanger the health or well-being of clients, and
7) Are allowed by agency policy/procedures.

RN Role:

1. Teaches UAP common repetitive tasks that do not require professional judgment.
2. Validates UAP competency to safely perform activity.
3. Supervises UAP performance of delegated tasks.

LPN Role:

1. Assures that RN has validated UAP's competency in considered activities.
2. Observes delegated tasks assuring performance according to policies, procedures, and standards of practice.

Note: Patient-care activities that are done infrequently should not be delegated by the licensed nurse to unlicensed personnel.

References:

21 NCAC 36.0221 – License Required Rule

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