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, state and federal regulations, and according to delegation principles in Nursing Law and Rules and the NCBON Decision Tree for Delegation to UAP available at www.ncbon.com. Examples of activities are:

- Laboratory functions, (capillary blood glucose analysis, phlebotomy),
- EKG procedure,
- Use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED),
- Pulse oximetry and transcutaneous CO₂ monitor,
- Handing instruments
- X-ray procedures,
- Audiometric screening,
- Vital signs,
- Set up and use of simple durable medical equipment (lifts, wheel chairs, etc.)

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.

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