

*A Position Statement does not carry the force and effect of law and rules but is adopted by the Board as a means of providing direction to licensees who seek to engage in safe nursing practice. Board Position Statements address issues of concern to the Board relevant to protection of the public and are reviewed regularly for relevance and accuracy to current practice, the Nursing Practice Act, and Board Administrative Code Rules.*

**Issue:**

The practice of nursing using telehealth/telenursing modalities is within the legal scope of practice for licensed nurses - registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), provided all licensure criteria within this position statement are met.

**Definition:**

Telehealth/telenursing (alternatively termed telemedicine) is the practice of healthcare within a professionally designated scope of practice using electronic communication, information technology, or other means between a licensee in one location and a client in another location.

**General Information:**

Consistent with the laws of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC), of which North Carolina (NC) is a member, nursing practice occurs at the location of the client at the time services are being provided.

Licensed nurses practicing via telehealth/telenursing modalities are required to be licensed or hold the privilege to practice in the state(s) where the client(s) is/are located. Licensed nurses are responsible and accountable for knowing, understanding, and practicing in compliance with the laws, rules, and standards of practice of the state(s) where the client(s) is/are located. The practice of nursing is not limited to client care but includes all nursing practice as defined by each state's practice law and rules. The following conditions apply:

1. Nurses holding an active, unencumbered multistate license in any NLC member state or jurisdiction, including NC, are legally authorized to practice to the extent of the RN or LPN scope in any and all NLC member states and jurisdictions. APRN practice is not included in the NLC.
2. Nurses holding an active, unencumbered single state license in any state or jurisdiction, including NC, are legally authorized to practice only in the single state(s) or jurisdiction(s) for which individual license(s) is/are held.
3. Licensed nurses seeking to practice via telehealth/telenursing or other care modalities outside of the United States, must contact the country or territories where the client resides to know, understand, and adhere to the law and rules of that country or territory before providing any telehealth/telenursing services to clients.

**RN Role:**

Telehealth/telenursing includes all elements of RN scope of practice as delineated in law and rules [General Statute (G.S.) 90-171.20 (7) and 21 NC Administrative Code (NCAC) 36.0224]. These include assessing (including triaging) clients; planning, implementing, and evaluating client care; teaching and counseling clients; managing and supervising the delivery of care; teaching nursing personnel/students; administering nursing services; collaborating; and consulting with others regarding the client's care.

**LPN Role:**

Must be supervised by an RN, APRN, physician, physician assistant, or other person authorized by state law to provide the supervision.

Telehealth/telenursing includes all elements of LPN scope of practice as delineated in law and rules [G.S. 90-171.20 (8) and 21 NCAC 36.0225]. These include participation in assessing, planning, and evaluating client care; implementing client care according to an established health care plan; teaching and counseling clients as assigned; and collaborating with other healthcare providers. LPN supervision of others is limited by state laws and rules. It is beyond the scope of LPN practice to perform complex, independent decision-making, such as that potentially required to triage client care needs via telehealth/telenursing modalities.

**Both RN and LPN Roles:**

1. Report and record pertinent information and communications in relation to all aspects of nursing care provided.
2. Accept responsibility and accountability for client care via telehealth/telenursing modalities provided the nurse has:
  - documented education, skills, and validated competencies necessary to safely deliver telehealth nursing services, and
  - knowledge of the language and cultural norms of the jurisdiction(s) where the client is receiving nursing care.
3. Accept orders for medical interventions via telehealth/telenursing from nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, physicians, and physician assistants authorized to make medical diagnoses and prescribe medical regimens.

**APRN Role:**

An APRN may practice within his/her designated scope of practice set forth in NC law and rules using telehealth methods of healthcare delivery.

Any APRN using telehealth to regularly provide services to clients located in NC need not reside in NC but must hold either a valid, unencumbered multi-state RN license, or a valid, unencumbered NC single-state RN license. Additionally, the APRN must meet the licensure, approval to practice, and listing requirements for their particular APRN role in concert with NC [law](#) and [rules](#). Likewise, any APRN who is approved or recognized to practice in NC and wishes to provide telehealth services outside of NC, must meet the licensure laws of the state, US territory, or international jurisdiction where the client is located before providing any telehealth services to clients outside of NC.

Telehealth nurses who wish to prescribe medications or treatments must have prescriptive authority in the state/country in which the client is located.

## **APRN, RN, and LPN Roles**

1. Maintain and safeguard telehealth client confidentiality and privacy including but not limited to delivery platforms and modalities, information, communications, and medical records in accordance with all federal and state laws and rules, and agency policies.
2. Provide a badge or other form of identification that is readily visible to the telehealth client(s) and displays the nurse's name, level of licensure, certification, and/or registration held.

## **Role of Chief Nurse Administrator/Director of Nursing/RN Leader**

As a component of leadership related to telehealth services, nurse leaders are responsible for identifying, developing, implementing, and updating standards, policies, and procedures related to the delivery of telehealth nursing services.

### **References:**

[G.S. 90-171.20 \(7\) & \(8\) - Nursing Practice Act](#)

[G.S. 90-640 Identification Badges Required](#)

[Nurse Licensure Compact - Article 9G](#)

[21 NCAC 36.0224 - Components of Nursing Practice for the Registered Nurse](#)

[21 NCAC 36.0225 - Components of Nursing Practice for the Licensed Practical Nurse](#)

[21 NCAC 36.0231 Exceptions to Health Care Practitioners Identification Requirements](#)

[21 NCAC 36.0811 - Method of Identification](#)

NC Board of Nursing (NCBON) Position Statement: [Standing Orders](#)

NCBON Position Statement: [RN Scope of Practice - Clarification](#)

NCBON Position Statement: [LPN Scope of Practice - Clarification](#)

NCBON Position Statement: [APRN Scope of Practice Clarification](#)

[NCSBN International Guiding Principles for Telehealth Nursing](#)

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