

*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.*

By law, the scopes of practice for the registered nurse (RN) and the license practical nurse (LPN) differ. The RN functions at an independent level while the LPN functions at a dependent level. This chart provides a snapshot comparison. For more information, please refer to the NCBON’s [RN Scope of Practice -- Clarification Position Statement](#) and the [LPN Scope of Practice – Clarification Position Statement](#) available on the North Carolina Board of Nursing’s website ([www.ncbon.com](http://www.ncbon.com)) under Practice – Position Statements.

Components of Nursing Practice	RN Scope of Practice <i>Independent role</i>	LPN Scope of Practice <i>Dependent role</i>
<b>Accepting an Assignment</b>	Accepts assignment based on variables in nursing practice setting and individual competency	Accepts assignment <b>dependent</b> on practice setting variables including availability of RN supervision, & individual competency
<b>Assessment</b>	Responsible for comprehensive ongoing assessment to determine nursing care needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collects, verifies, analyzes, and interprets data in relation to health status</li> <li>Formulates nursing diagnoses</li> <li>Determines extent and frequency of assessment needed</li> </ul>	<b>Participates in</b> on-going assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collects data <u>using structured, written guidelines/forms</u></li> <li>Recognizes relationship to health status &amp; treatment</li> <li>Determines <u>immediate</u> need for intervention</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	Develops client plan of care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies client’s needs</li> <li>Prioritizes nursing diagnoses</li> <li>Determines nursing care goals</li> <li>Determines interventions appropriate to client</li> </ul>	<b>Participates in</b> planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Suggests</b> goals and interventions to RN</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	Implements plan of care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procures resources</li> <li>Assigns, delegates, and supervises licensed and unlicensed personnel</li> </ul>	Implements established plan of care with following <b>limitations</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RN supervision required</li> <li>Assignment to other LPNs and delegation to UAPs</li> <li>Supervision by LPN limited to assuring that tasks have been</li> </ul>

		completed according to agency policies and procedures
<b>Evaluation</b>	Evaluates and determines effectiveness of nursing interventions and achievement of expected outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modifies plan of care</li> </ul>	<b>Participates in</b> evaluation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies client's response to nursing intervention and <b>suggests</b> to RN revision to plan of care</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting and Recording</b>	Reports and Records	Reports and Records
<b>Collaborating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates &amp; works with those whose services may affect client's health care</li> <li>Initiates collaboration through coordinating, planning, and implementing nursing care of client within the multidisciplinary team</li> <li>Participates in multidisciplinary decision-making</li> <li>Seeks &amp; utilizes appropriate resources</li> </ul>	<b>Participates in</b> collaboration as assigned.
<b>Components of Nursing Practice</b>	<b>RN Scope of Practice</b> <i>Independent role</i>	<b>LPN Scope of Practice</b> <i>Dependent role</i>
<b>Teaching and Counseling</b>	Responsible to teach and counsel clients, families, groups and nursing care providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies learning needs</li> <li>Develops and evaluates teaching plans</li> <li>Makes referrals to appropriate resources</li> </ul>	<b>Participates in</b> teaching and counseling of clients and families as assigned through the implementation of an established teaching plan or protocol
<b>Managing Nursing Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous availability</li> <li>Assesses capabilities of personnel</li> <li>Delegates &amp; assigns personnel</li> <li>Accountable for nursing care given by all</li> </ul>	<b>Not within the LPN scope of practice</b> NOTE: See limited supervisory role for LPN in the Implementation Section above.
<b>Administering Nursing Services</b>	Administers nursing services	<b>Not within the LPN scope of practice</b>
<b>Accepting Responsibility</b>	Accepts responsibility for self	Accepts responsibility for self

**References:**

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

[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](#)

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