



RN AND LPN SCOPE OF PRACTICE: COMPONENTS OF NURSING COMPARISON CHART

POSITION STATEMENT
for RN and LPN Practice

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) under Practice – Position Statements.

Components of Nursing Practice	RN Scope of Practice <i>Independent role</i>	LPN Scope of Practice <i>Dependent role</i>
Accepting an Assignment	Accepts assignment based on variables in nursing practice setting and individual competency	Accepts assignment dependent on practice setting variables including availability of RN supervision, & individual competency
Assessment	Responsible for comprehensive ongoing assessment to determine nursing care needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects, verifies, analyzes, and interprets data in relation to health status • Formulates nursing diagnoses • Determines extent and frequency of assessment needed 	Participates in on-going assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects data • Recognizes relationship to health status & treatment • Determines immediate need for intervention
Planning	Develops client plan of care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies client's needs • Prioritizes nursing diagnoses • Determines nursing care goals • Determines interventions appropriate to client 	Participates in planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests goals and interventions to RN
Implementation	Implements plan of care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procures resources • Assigns, delegates, and supervises licensed and unlicensed personnel 	Implements established plan of care with following limitations : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RN supervision required • Assignment to other LPNs and delegation to UAPs • Supervision by LPN limited to assuring that tasks have been completed according to agency policies and procedures
Evaluation	Evaluates and determines effectiveness of nursing interventions and achievement of expected outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifies plan of care 	Participates in evaluation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies client's response to nursing intervention and suggests to RN revision to plan of care
Reporting and Recording	Reports and Records	Reports and Records
Collaborating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates & works with those whose services may affect client's health care • Initiates collaboration through coordinating, planning, and implementing nursing care of client within the multidisciplinary team • Participates in multidisciplinary decision-making • Seeks & utilizes appropriate resources 	Participates in collaboration as assigned.

Components of Nursing Practice	RN Scope of Practice <i>Independent role</i>	LPN Scope of Practice <i>Dependent role</i>
Teaching and Counseling	Responsible to teach and counsel clients, families, groups and nursing care providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies learning needs Develops and evaluates teaching plans Makes referrals to appropriate resources 	Participates in teaching and counseling of clients and families as assigned through the implementation of an established teaching plan or protocol
Managing Nursing Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous availability Assesses capabilities of personnel Delegates & assigns personnel Accountable for nursing care given by all 	<p style="color: red;">Not within the LPN scope of practice</p> <p>NOTE: See limited supervisory role for LPN in the Implementation Section above.</p>
Administering Nursing Services	Administers nursing services	<p style="color: red;">Not within the LPN scope of practice</p>
Accepting Responsibility	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 Practice for the Registered Nurse](#)
[21 NCAC 36. 0225 Components of Practice for the Licensed Practical Nurse](#)

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