

# Oregon State Board of Nursing Scope-of-Practice Decision-Making Guideline for RN and LPN Practice

## **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide nurses with a guideline for determining whether or not an activity is within scope of practice.

## **Statutory Definition of the Practice of Nursing and Definitions for RN and LPN Practice**

“Practice of nursing” means diagnosing and treating human responses to actual or potential health problems through such services as identification thereof, health teaching, health counseling and providing care supportive to or restorative of life and well-being and including the performance of such additional services requiring education and training which are recognized by the nursing profession as proper to be performed by nurses licensed under ORS 678.010 to 678.410 and which are recognized by rules of the board. “Practice of nursing” includes executing medical orders as prescribed by a physician or dentist but does not include such execution by a member of the immediate family for another member or execution by a person designated by or on behalf of a person requiring care as provided by board rule where the person executing the care is not licensed under ORS 678.010 to 678.410. The practice of nursing includes providing supervision of nursing assistants.

“Practice of registered nursing” means the application of knowledge drawn from broad in-depth education in the social and physical sciences in assessing, planning, ordering, giving, delegating, teaching and supervising care which promotes the person’s optimum health and independence.

“Practice of practical nursing” means the application of knowledge drawn from basic education in the social and physical sciences in planning and giving nursing care and in assisting persons toward achieving of health and well-being.

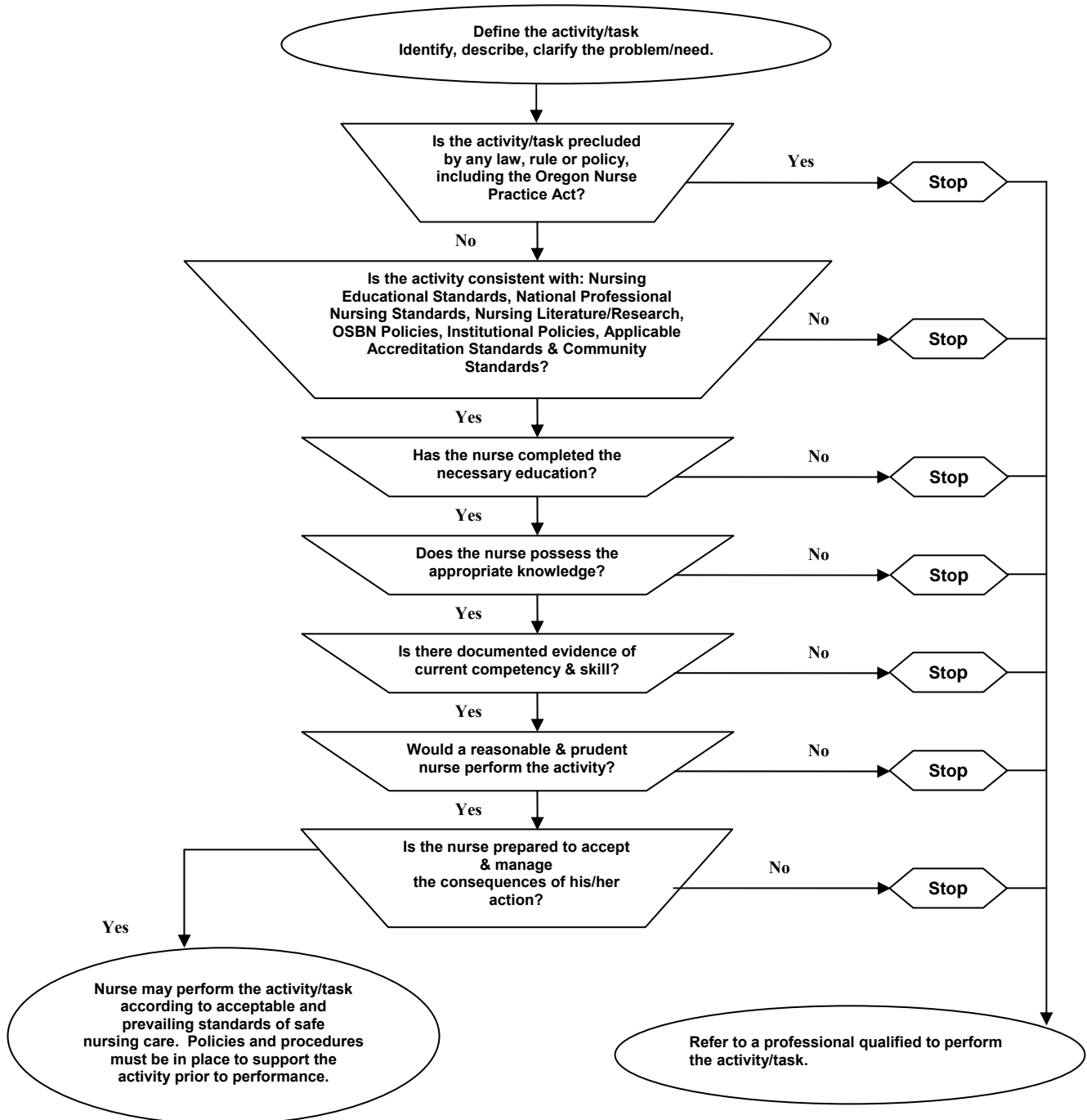
## **Statement Regarding Scope of Practice**

The profession of nursing is an autonomous and dynamic discipline. It is a self-governing profession that is grounded in science. Nursing practice changes and evolves in response to health care needs of society, technical advancements, and the expansion of scientific and nursing knowledge. The scope of practice for each nursing licensure category includes all of the activities in which a nurse may engage at his/her level of licensure. Within that broader scope, however, the scope for each individual nurse will vary according to practice experiences and professional development activities. Each nurse may effectively change his/her *individual scope* through in-service education, continuing education and practice experience. Documentation of how competency in a new nursing activity is initially achieved, and how it is maintained, is required.

The licensed nurse is responsible and accountable, both professionally and legally, for determining his/her *individual scope* of nursing practice. Activities within an individual nurse’s scope must still fall within the broader scope written in statute. Thus, there is no authority for the nurse to include individual activities which exceed the broader scope defined by statute. Practically, this means that a physician cannot expand nursing scope of practice by directing a nurse to perform an activity that is not recognized by the nursing profession as proper to be performed by a nurse in Oregon. Since the role and responsibilities of the nurse, and consequently the scope of nursing practice, is ever changing and increasingly complex, it is important that the nurse is able to make decisions regarding his/her own scope of practice.

# Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) Scope of Practice Decision Making Guideline for RN and LPN Practice

*Prior to contacting the OSBN, please review this decision tree.*



## References

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**Adopted: November 9, 2006**

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*The Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) is authorized by Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 678 to exercise general supervision over the practice of nursing in Oregon to include regulation of nursing licensure, education and practice in order to assure that the citizens of Oregon receive safe and effective care. The OSBN further interprets statute and rule and issues opinions in the form of Board Policies, Policy Guidelines and Position Statements. Although they do not have the force and effect of law, these opinions are advisory in nature and issued as guidelines for safe nursing practice.*