



Issue Response

OREGON HEALTH LICENSING AGENCY

Respiratory Therapy & Polysomnography

June 28, 2013

On March 18, 2013, the Oregon Health Licensing Agency (Agency) received questions regarding scope of practice from John Long from Samaritan Sleep Disorders Center, Good Samaritan Hospital in Corvallis Oregon.

Original Questions as Follows:

Does the board still only allow Licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners to administer zolpidem or zaleplon sleep meds or can Licensed Polysomnographic Technologists also give these meds if they've completed the same hospital and medical director approved competency training for dispensing these medications as do Licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners?

Does the board continue to allow only licensed Respiratory Care Practitioners to perform Positive Airway Pressure titrations that involve setting respiratory tidal volumes or back-up rates, or can licensed Polysomnographic technologists also perform the above titration studies?

Please note that these compound questions have been broken into its component parts and answered separately.

Question 1a: May a Licensed Respiratory Care Practitioner administer zolpidem or zaleplon sleep medications?

Answer 1a: Yes, but only if these medications are related to respiratory care procedures necessary to implement a treatment, disease prevention, pulmonary rehabilitative or diagnostic regimen prescribed by a physician. *See* ORS 688.800(5)(a).

Question 1b: Can a Licensed Polysomnographic Technologists administer zolpidem or zaleplon sleep medications if they've completed the same hospital and medical director approved competency training for dispensing these medications as do Licensed Respiratory Care Practitioner?

Answer 1b: No. Polysomnographic Technologists are only licensed by OHLA to perform the activities within the definition of "polysomnography" in ORS 688.800(2). This definition does not include the administration of any pharmacological agents.

Question 2a Can a licensed Respiratory Care Practitioner perform Positive Airway Pressure titrations that involve setting respiratory tidal volumes or back-up rates?

Answer 2a: Yes, if this is a respiratory care service prescribed by a physician.

Question 2b: Can licensed Polysomnographic technologists perform Positive Airway Pressure titrations that involve setting respiratory tidal volumes or back-up rates ?

Answer 2b: Yes, if:

(a) procedure is related to the treatment, management, or diagnostic testing of patients with disorders related to sleep AND

(b) the patient is spontaneously breathing and the mask or oral appliance does not extend into the trachea to an artificial airway.

See ORS 688.800(2)(a).

Important Note: The Agency does not provide personal legal advice to licensees or members of the public. The responses below are specific to only those questions asked. Even slight changes in the scope or content of the question may change the applicability of these responses in a different situation. Please consult your own attorney for legal advice regarding Oregon laws and administrative rules.