

Advanced Nurse Practitioners (APRN) in the Role of Registered Nurse First Assistants (RNFA)

Purpose: To clarify the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) position on the practice of a Nurse Practitioner (NP), Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), or a Certified Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), who, for the purposes of this statement referred to as APRNs, performs the role of an RNFA during a surgical procedure.

Definition of RNFA: Per the Association of Operating Room Nurses (AORN), position statement an RNFA is a perioperative registered nurse who:

- works in collaboration with the surgeon and other health care team members to achieve optimal patient outcomes;
- has acquired the necessary knowledge, judgment, and skills specific to the expanded role of RNFA clinical practice;
- intraoperatively practices at the direction of the surgeon; and
- does not concurrently function as a scrub person.

APRN practice as an RNFA: The APRN functions as an autonomous practitioner in the pre-operative and post-operative management of optimum patient outcomes. Per the AORN definition, the tasks involved during the intraoperative period are consistent with RN level RNFA practice.

Oregon Statute and Rules related to RNFA practice:

ORS 678.366:

Registered nurse first assistants: The Oregon State Board of Nursing shall adopt rules establishing procedures for the recognition of registered nurses who become registered nurse first assistants by receiving additional certification through nationally recognized professional organizations.

OAR 851-045-0060 (12):

(a) The RN who accepts an assignment to practice in the role of RNFA shall have successfully completed an RNFA program that meets the Association of Perioperative Nurses standards for the RN first assistant programs;

(b) Intraoperatively, the RNFA shall practice at the direction of the surgeon and not concurrently function in any non-RNFA practice role; and

(c) The RNFA shall practice under the direct supervision of the surgeon who is on site in the unit of care and not otherwise engaged in any other uninterruptible procedure or activity.

The OSBN has determined that:

1. The Oregon State Legislature has delegated the rules of the recognition and certification of RNFA practice to the OSBN.
2. Rules approved by the Board as part of Division 45, *Standards and Scope of Practice for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses*, describes the education requirements for RNFA practice. This is described under the RN level of practice and, as such, the RNFA is in the scope of practice of qualified RNs.

Oregon State Board of Nursing Interpretive Statement

3. No national certification, degree or post-master's certificate program exists to prepare the APRN in the specific role of RNFA. No APRN course of studies results in a specialty as a "Surgical APRN". All APRNs must have and maintain an RN license in order to be recognized as an APRN. While the APRN license may authorize an advanced level of RN practice, per the Nurse Practice Act, all APRNs must also comply with the requirements of both Division 45 and the respective APRN division applicable to APRN license type.
4. OSBN rules require that any RNFA education program must comply with the requirements and standards as described by the AORN. This education is at the RN level of practice. Therefore all licensees of the OSBN performing in the role of an RNFA will obtain education at their RN level of practice. The role of the RNFA is not within the scope of a Licensed Practice Nurse (LPN).
5. For the OSBN to comply with the requirements of Oregon statute to "*establishing procedures for the recognition of registered nurses who become registered nurse first assists*" the agency has established a roster of RNFA qualified nurses through the submission an education attestation form and placement on the RNFA registry. This registry information is transmitted to the Oregon Common Credentialing Program and acts as a primary source verification for the purposes of credentialing. While there is no statutory requirement for placement on the RNFA registry, not being on the registry will require the practitioner to provide RNFA education verification to all agencies and organizations as requested for the purposes of credentialing.

References:

ORS 678

OAR 45

<https://www.aorn.org/guidelines/clinical-resources/rn-first-assistant-resources>

Attestation statement available @ www.oregon.gov/osbn

Adopted: June 14, 2018