



Frequently Asked Questions: SGNA Practice Documents

(1) What are SGNA standards, practice documents and position statements?

SGNA regularly produces and updates a library of proprietary practice documents. [These documents](#) include position statements (SGNA's position on a particular topic or issue), and standards and guidelines (SGNA's formalized guidance on a particular topic or issue). The documents also reference additional resources that can be used for more in-depth study of a topic.

These practice documents support SGNA's mission and are intended to provide a framework for the safe and effective practice of gastroenterology/endoscopy nursing in all practice settings.

(2) Who can access SGNA practice documents?

SGNA provides its practice documents at no cost to any individual who wishes to access them as a service to the gastroenterology nursing field. The documents can be downloaded [here](#) via the SGNA website (sgna.org) or SGNA mobile app.

Members may easily access the documents once they are logged in, and non-members are simply asked to provide basic contact information prior to accessing to help SGNA monitor the volume of requests for these documents.

Please note, because these documents are copyrighted material, SGNA asks that anyone who wishes to make multiple printings/copies of the documents secure permission in advance. To request permission, please contact SGNA Headquarters at 800/245-SGNA (7462) or info@sgna.org.

(3) What areas of practice are covered by SGNA documents?

SGNA's practice documents address issues directly affecting the practice of gastroenterology nursing. The practice documents cover topics such as topics such as sedation and analgesia, infection prevention in the gastroenterology setting, role delineations, and safety in the gastroenterology setting.

The full table of contents is accessible [here](#) or via the SGNA mobile app.

(4) Who is responsible for creating and updating SGNA practice documents?

All documents are written by the SGNA Practice Committee, which develops practice-related strategies that assist in fulfilling SGNA's mission and goals while meeting the needs of members and the specialty practice. Before they are released, practice documents undergo a rigorous review, copy editing and approval process by the SGNA Board of Directors, legal counsel, and other key members and stakeholders.

To learn more about this process, you can download [this document](#) that details the process for creating and revising practice documents. And be sure to share this process document with your colleagues so they can have a greater appreciation for this process.



Frequently Asked Questions: SGNA Practice Documents (continued)

(5) Which SGNA practice documents are most frequently used in GI units?

More SGNA members have indicated they use these practice documents than any others, however, all are relevant to those in the GI setting:

- Management of Endoscopic Accessories, Valves, and Water and Irrigation Bottles in the Gastroenterology Setting
- Multi-society Guideline on Reprocessing Flexible Gastrointestinal Endoscopes: 2016 Update
- Guidelines for the Use of High-level Disinfectants & Sterilants in the Gastroenterology Setting
- Standards of Infection Prevention in Reprocessing of Flexible Gastrointestinal Endoscopes
- Standard of Infection Prevention in the Gastroenterology Setting

(6) What is/are the difference(s) between SGNA guidelines and those of other organizations?

SGNA practice documents are developed by experienced GI nurses and subject-matter experts about procedures and processes they frequently perform and train others on. As such, they reflect a depth of knowledge about the specialty and the role of nurses and associates that only SGNA can provide. Information within the practice documents are based on the highest level of evidence possible. They are subjected to a thorough review process and updated regularly to ensure they reflect the latest advances and accepted best practices.

In some instances, SGNA will produce guidelines in collaboration with other organizations, seek their endorsement of guidelines or provide endorsement to the guidelines produced by another organization.

(7) When there are multiple guidelines for the same area of practice, which organization's guidelines should be used?

When conducting surveys, accrediting organizations such as the Joint Commission are focused on your unit's consistent adherence to a practice document than on which organization produced a practice document.

It is critical, however, that you can demonstrate that you are using practice documents from a reputable organization, all members of your unit have been instructed on the information included in a guideline and are following that guidance for each procedure.

Even if your facility uses guidelines from other organizations for other areas of practice, your gastroenterology unit can use SGNA's practice documents, and is encouraged to do so. Because they are developed by experienced GI nurses and subject-matter experts about procedures and processes



Frequently Asked Questions: SGNA Practice Documents (continued)

they frequently perform and train others on, SGNA's practice documents reflect a depth of knowledge about the specialty and the role of nurses and associates that only SGNA can provide.

(8) Do different organizations work together in the development of each other's guidelines?
SGNA may seek endorsement from other organizations for its guidelines or provide endorsement to the guidelines produced by another organization, depending on the issue being addressed in a practice document. Ultimately, it is each organization's decision to incorporate feedback received during the review process.

(9) How can I find out which organization's guidelines are being used in my unit?
If you are unsure which organization's practice documents are being used in your unit, talk to your supervisor or nurse manager.

You are welcome to share SGNA's practice documents with your supervisor and note what makes SGNA's practice documents unique – that they are specifically designed to provide a framework for the safe and effective practice of gastroenterology/endoscopy nursing. As such, the documents undergo a rigorous development and review process that incorporates feedback from many experienced nurses, educators and stakeholders who are responsible for performing and/or training GI nurses and associates on the related processes.

(10) How can I encourage my manager/unit to use SGNA guidelines?
SGNA has developed a number of resources that can be used to help explain its practice documents and how your unit will benefit from the consistent adoption of these documents. Those resources are available at sgna.org.

(11) What if the surveyor is questioning my choice of guidelines?
It is uncommon for an accrediting organization's surveyor to question why you selected the guidelines of a specific organization. However, if that does occur, you can point to the resources SGNA has developed to outline the creation process and key differentiator of its documents, which are available [here](#) on the SGNA website.

(12) How do I reconcile the differences between the different guidelines in the same area of practice?
During an accrediting organization survey, your surveyor will want all nurses and associates in your unit to be able to demonstrate that you are using practice documents from a reputable organization and are based on evidence. They will note that all staff have been instructed on the information included in practice documents and that you are all following that guidance for each procedure.