



Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc.

## POSITION STATEMENT

### *Role Delineation of the Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse in Gastroenterology*

#### Disclaimer

The Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. assumes no responsibility for the practices or recommendations of any member or other practitioner, or for the policies and procedures of any practice setting. Nurses and associates function within the limitations of licensure, state nurse practice act, and/or institutional policy.

#### Definitions

**Role delineation** is a description of the responsibilities and functions of a health care worker in a specific role, including the current activities common to this role.

#### Background

The role of the Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse (LPN/LVN) has expanded with the changes in advancing technology and newly-defined patient needs. Recognizing that the role of the LPN/LVN in gastroenterology, hepatology and/or endoscopy is still evolving, the following is a statement intended to broadly describe the responsibilities and functions of the LPN/LVN in this specialty. The roles which the LPN/LVN assumes depend on his/her basic nursing preparation, specialized formal or informal education, and clinical experiences. Certification as a gastroenterology nurse (CGN) validates the acquisition of such skills and knowledge (Reeves, 1997). LPNs/LVNs practice in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, private offices, ambulatory surgery centers, and clinics. The LPN/LVN functions within the scope of practice as defined by state nurse practice acts, job description of the employing facility, *SGNA Standards of Practice* (2005), and the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses' *Code for Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses* (1979).

#### Position

Under the supervision of a licensed RN or physician, the LPN/LVN is accountable for the quality of nursing care he or she provides to patients, and utilizing the nursing process, assumes responsibility for planning, implementing, directing, and evaluating nursing care for assigned patients in the gastroenterology/endoscopy setting. The specific patient populations to whom direct care is provided include adults, adolescents, or children with gastrointestinal disorders/diseases.

The role of the LPN/LVN includes, but is not limited to:

1. Observing, recording and reporting significant changes which require intervention or changes in the patient's plan of care.
2. Implementing interventions within the limitations of licensure and institutional policy.
3. Providing health education and procedural teaching to patients and significant others (Reeves, 1997).

## **Role Delineations**

4. Administering and evaluating pharmacological and other therapeutic treatment regimens within the limitations of licensure and institutional policy.
5. Contributing to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of patient care.
6. Establishing priorities and making ethically-sound decisions to ensure safe patient care.
7. Assisting the physician and/or registered nurse during diagnostic and therapeutic procedures to promote optimal patient outcomes by team collaboration.
8. Responding to emergency situations to promote optimal patient outcomes by recognizing changes in the patient's health status.
9. Performing diagnostic studies as ordered by a physician.
10. Documenting patient data to ensure continuity in the provision and coordination of patient care.
11. Assisting with follow-up care.
12. Collaborating with other health care professionals.
13. Acting as a resource for others.
14. Serving as a mentor for others.
15. Participating in continuing education and achieving/maintaining certification.
16. Participating in data collection for research, and using scientific findings to improve patient outcomes.
17. Monitoring performance by developing and participating in quality management activities.
18. Participating as an active member in professional and consumer organizations, contributing to professional publications, and presenting at professional meetings (Reeves,1997).

## **References**

- National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses, Inc. (1979). *Code for Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses*. Garner, NC: Author.
- Reeves, D.L. (1997). A Licensed Practical Nurse/Licensed Vocational Nurse's (LPN/LVN) Guide to the Changing Healthcare System. *Gastroenterology Nursing Journal*, 20(20), 54-56.
- Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. (2005). Standards of care. In Standards of clinical nursing practice and role delineation statements. *Gastroenterology Nursing*, 28(5), 422-427.

## **Recommended reading**

- Manthey, M. (1989). The Role of the LPN or.... the Problem of Two Levels. *Nursing Management*, 20(2), 26-28.
- Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. (2003). *Gastroenterology Nursing: A Core Curriculum*. Chicago: Author.

**Approved by the SGNA Board of Directors.  
Revised February 2001, February 2005.**

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