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COMPETENCY VALIDATION

Position Statement for RN and LPN Practice

Issue:
The RN is accountable for validating the qualifications of personnel to whom nursing care is assigned or delegated. Qualifications include requirements for licensure or listing as well as knowledge and skills directly related to the nursing activities to be performed. The LPN's participation in validation of competencies is limited to on-the-job assurance that tasks have been performed according to standards of practice established in agency policies and procedures and reporting this information to the RN. Before assigning nursing activities to staff, the RN or LPN needs access to information about the RN-validated competencies for each individual.

RN Role:
- Responsible for assuring the delivery of safe patient care;
- Establishing the mechanisms for validation of knowledge, skills, and competency; and
- Making the final determination of the overall competency of personnel through:
  - successful completion of orientation processes;
  - competency validation at intervals specified in agency policies and procedures; and
  - competency validation for activities newly added to job responsibilities.

LPN Role:
- Responsible for assuring the delivery of safe patient care;
- Demonstrating proper performance of specified nursing tasks;
- Observing the performance of specific nursing tasks by LPNs or UAP in relation to the step-by-step procedure established by the agency;
- Communicating observations of performance to the RN accountable for orientation/staff development or to the RN/other authorized healthcare provider supervisor; and
- Intervening immediately if the actions of an LPN or UAP jeopardize the safety of the patient.

Note: It is beyond LPN scope of practice to "sign off" nursing personnel competency validation.

References:
21 NCAC 36.0224 (a)(d)(i) & (j) Components of Practice for the Registered Nurse (RN Rules)
21 NCAC 36.0225 (d) Components of Practice for the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN Rules)

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