

Restricted Activities: Standards for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners

(Not in effect until approved)

Purpose

This standard applies to registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs), herein referred to as **REGISTRANTS**¹. This document identifies standards and expectations for performing **RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES** by registrants to ensure **PATIENT** safety. These standards provide clarification and direction on the provision of restricted activities within the context of RN and NP practice.

Registrants may perform the restricted activities that are authorized within the category of the register in which they are registered. The *Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation* (Alta Reg 22/2023, s 60) authorizes the restricted activities that each category on the register may provide and are as follows:

- RN register
- **CERTIFIED GRADUATE NURSE** register
- NP register
- provisional register (as **GRADUATE NURSE** or **GRADUATE NURSE PRACTITIONER** [GNP])
- RN and NP on the courtesy register

Restricted activities are high risk activities performed as a part of providing a **HEALTH SERVICE** that require specific competencies to be carried out safely by authorized persons. The authorization of a restricted activity in the regulation does not mean that a registrant can perform any identified restricted activity in any situation or in any practice area.

Criteria

To meet this standard, registrants must meet the following criteria.

¹ Words and phrases displayed in BOLD CAPITALS upon first mention are defined in the Glossary.

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The registrant must

1. Only perform restricted activities that
 - 1.1. are within RN and NP practice,
 - 1.2. they are authorized and competent to perform,
 - 1.3. are appropriate to the clinical practice area, and
 - 1.4. are in the best interest of the patient.
2. Only supervise the performance of restricted activities that they themselves are authorized and competent to perform without being required to have **SUPERVISION** themselves.
3. Ensure the performance of the restricted activity is **EVIDENCE-INFORMED**.
4. Assess the patient to determine whether the restricted activity is warranted by
 - 4.1. considering the known risks and benefits to the patient,
 - 4.2. assessing the **PREDICTABILITY** of the outcomes, and
 - 4.3. considering any other factors that may impact patient outcomes.
5. Maintain the necessary **COMPETENCE** required to safely perform restricted activities relevant to their clinical practice area.
6. Evaluate and monitor the patient's response and document the performance of restricted activities.
7. Take action and provide care when intended and unintended outcomes arise.
8. Only perform restricted activities as outlined in the *Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation* (section 60) in accordance with the category of the register they are registered, unless specifically approved by the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CRNA).

Registrants on the registered nurse register and the certified graduate nurse register can

9. Apply non-ionizing radiation in the application of ultrasound imaging to a fetus, but only under the supervision of a person who provides health services and who is authorized by a regulation under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA, 2000) or by another enactment to apply ultrasound to a fetus.

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Registrants on the registered nurse register can

10. When authorized by the registrar, prescribe **SCHEDULE 1 DRUGS** (except controlled drugs and substances), and order diagnostic tests in a specific clinical practice area, and must practice in accordance with the standards and criteria outlined in *Registered Nurse Prescribing Schedule 1 Drugs and Ordering Diagnostic Tests: Requirements and Standards*.
11. Order any form of ionizing radiation in medical radiography and use the appropriate **CLINICAL SUPPORT TOOL** in their specific clinical practice area to order medical radiography.

Registrants on the NP register, the courtesy register as NPs, and the provisional register as GNP, can perform all the restricted activities that registrants on any category of the register can perform, and additionally can

12. Set or reset a fracture of a bone, however, must use the guidance and advice provided by the CRNA to determine the knowledge and skill required to perform the restricted activity to set or reset a fracture of a bone safely and competently.
13. Prescribe a Schedule 1 drug.
14. Prescribe blood or blood products.
15. Prescribe diagnostic imaging contrast agents.
16. Prescribe radiopharmaceuticals, radiolabelled substances, radioactive gases or radioaerosols.
17. Order or apply any form of ionizing radiation in medical radiography.
18. Order any form of ionizing radiation in nuclear medicine.
19. Order non-ionizing radiation in magnetic resonance imaging.
20. Order or apply non-ionizing radiation in ultrasound imaging, including any application of ultrasound to a fetus.

Registrants on any category of the register can

- a. cut a body tissue, administer anything by an invasive procedure on body tissue or perform surgical or other invasive procedures on body tissue below the dermis or the mucous membrane;
- b. insert or remove instruments, devices, fingers or hands

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- i. beyond the cartilaginous portion of the ear canal,
 - ii. beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow,
 - iii. beyond the pharynx,
 - iv. beyond the opening of the urethra,
 - v. beyond the labia majora,
 - vi. beyond the anal verge, or
 - vii. into an artificial opening into the body;
- c. insert into the ear canal, under pressure, liquid, air or gas;
- d. reduce a dislocation of a joint;
- e. **DISPENSE, COMPOUND**, provide for selling or sell a Schedule 1 drug or **SCHEDULE 2 DRUG**, however, must not distribute, trade or barter for money or valuable consideration, or keep for sale or offer for sale, a Schedule 1 drug or a Schedule 2 drug, but may distribute or give away a Schedule 1 drug or a Schedule 2 drug without expectation or hope of compensation or reward;
- f. administer a vaccine or parenteral nutrition;
- g. compound or administer blood or blood products;
- h. administer diagnostic imaging contrast agents;
- i. administer radiopharmaceuticals, radiolabelled substances, radioactive gases or radioaerosols;
- j. prescribe or administer nitrous oxide, for the purposes of anaesthesia or sedation;
- k. order or apply non-ionizing radiation in ultrasound imaging, other than the application of ultrasound to a fetus;
- l. perform a psychosocial intervention with an expectation of treating a substantial disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation, or memory that grossly impairs
 - i. judgment,
 - ii. behaviour,
 - iii. capacity to recognize reality, or
 - iv. ability to meet the ordinary demands of life;
- m. manage labour or deliver a baby.

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Glossary

CERTIFIED GRADUATE NURSE – Prior to 1983 this individual was a registrant who met all the requirements for registration except for the registration exam, as the legislation in effect at the time did not require them to pass a registration exam. When the *Nursing Profession Act* was proclaimed in 1983, a certified graduate nurse was grandfathered on the register. This category continues to exist in the HPA (2000); however, no new Alberta nurse can be added to this category.

CLINICAL SUPPORT TOOL – An evidence-informed tool used by the practice setting to guide decisions related to prescribing and ordering of diagnostic test and ordering of medical radiography.

COMPETENCE – The integrated knowledge, skills, judgment, and attributes required of a nurse to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting.

COMPOUND – Is a restricted activity under the HPA that requires specific competencies and skills to be carried out safely. It means “to mix together 2 or more ingredients of which at least one is a drug for the purposes of dispensing a drug or drugs, but does not include reconstituting a drug or drugs with only water” (HPA, 2000, p. 17).

DISPENSE – Is a restricted activity under the HPA that requires specific competencies and skills to be carried out safely. It means “with respect to drugs, to provide a drug pursuant to a prescription for a person, but does not include the administration of a drug to a person” (HPA, 2000, p. 17).

EVIDENCE-INFORMED – Knowledge derived from research and other credible sources that supports decision-making in registrant practice.

GRADUATE NURSE – A graduate of an approved or recognized entry-level nursing education program or an internationally educated nurse applicant who is on the provisional register and is in the process of meeting the CRNA registered nurse registration requirements.

GRADUATE NURSE PRACTITIONER – A graduate of an approved NP program who is on the provisional register and is in the process of meeting the CRNA NP registration requirements. These individuals may be graduates from an approved NP program leading to initial NP registration or internationally educated NPs.

HEALTH SERVICE – “A service provided to people

(i) to protect, promote or maintain their health,

(ii) to prevent illness,

(iii) to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, or

(iv) to take care of health needs of the ill, disabled, injured or dying” (HPA, 2000).

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PATIENT(S) – The term patients can refer to clients, residents, families, groups, communities and populations.

PREDICTABILITY – The extent to which one can identify in advance a patient's response on the basis of observation, experience or scientific reason. It involves assessment of how effectively the health condition is managed, the changes likely to occur and whether the type or timing of changes can be anticipated.

REGISTRANT(S) – Includes registered nurses (RNs), graduate nurses, certified graduate nurses, nurse practitioners (NPs), graduate nurse practitioners and RN or NP courtesy registrants on the CRNA registry.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES – High risk activities that require specific competencies and skills to be carried out safely and are listed in the HPA (2000) and the *Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation* (Alta Reg 22/2023, s 60) that are part of providing a health service. Restricted activities are not linked to any particular health profession, and a number of regulated health practitioners may perform a particular restricted activity.

SCHEDULE 1 DRUG – Require a prescription and are dispensed by pharmacists after a practitioner's diagnosis, with sales regulated by provincial pharmacy laws (National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities [NAPRA], n.d.). See the Alberta *Pharmacy and Drug Act* and regulations.

SCHEDULE 2 DRUG – Do not require a prescription but must be dispensed by a pharmacist, who may refer the patient to a practitioner, and are kept in a non-public area of the pharmacy (NAPRA, n.d.). See the Alberta *Pharmacy and Drug Act* and regulations.

SUPERVISION – The consultation, guidance and oversight by a registrant in the practice setting. Supervision may be direct, indirect or indirect remote.

References

Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7. <https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/H07.pdf>

Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation, Alta Reg 22/2023, s 60. https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2023_022.pdf

National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities. (n.d.). *What are the national drug schedules?* <https://www.napra.ca/national-drug-schedules/what-are-the-national-drug-schedules/>

Pharmacy and Drug Act, RSA 2000, c P-13. <https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/P13.pdf>