

POSITION STATEMENT

21-1

Role of the Licensed Nurse in the Practice of Medical Aesthetics, Cosmetic, and Dermatological Procedures

The performance of aesthetic procedures is within the scope of practice of a trained advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) or registered nurse (RN) as part of a medically prescribed plan of care for treatment of various dermatological conditions or as a part of a health maintenance and health promotion regime. The performance of aesthetic procedures is not within the scope of practice of a licensed practical nurse (LPN) or a licensed psychiatric technician nurse (LPTN).

A. DEFINITIONS

1. Aesthetics: Clinical procedures and products to improve appearance, treat skin conditions, or reverse signs of aging.
2. Dispensing: Process of preparing and giving medicine to patient for self-administration.
3. Good Faith Exam: medical screening exam by a qualified provider with prescriptive authority to determine a patient's suitability for the desired service. Exam must include complete medical history, appropriate physical exam, and treatment plan. Good faith exams should be completed, at a minimum, initially, annually and with deviations from the treatment plan or changes in patient status.
4. Qualified Provider: Physician, dentist, APRN, or physician assistant (PA) authorized to prescribe medications or therapeutic devices who has the knowledge, skill, and competence to perform the procedure, and has performed an initial, documented history and physical assessment/evaluation and developed a client-specific treatment plan.
5. Standing Orders: pre-approved instructions that allow nurses or other healthcare staff to carry out specific treatments, tests, or actions for a patient after a qualified provider has already evaluated the patient and established the treatment plan, without needing a new direct order each time. Standing orders are not acceptable substitutes for individualized orders and assessments, as they do not address the specific health needs of each patient.

B. EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

The nurse shall have documented educational preparation, supervised clinical practice experience and competency validation appropriate to responsibilities, treatment provided, and patient population served. The qualified provider shall document competency for the RN. For APRNs practicing under a collaborative practice agreement, the collaborating physician shall document competency for the APRN. For APRNs, the practice of aesthetics must fall within the scope of practice for the individual population foci.

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- C. Documentation of ongoing competence should be readily available in the APRN's or RN's personnel file. To ensure patient safety, the APRN and RN should gain and demonstrate the following knowledge and skill before engaging in the practice of aesthetics:
 - 1. Anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology regarding the integumentary system as well as systems specific to the procedure(s) being performed.
 - 2. Proper technique for each dermatologic procedure and nursing care required.
 - 3. Proper client selection, history taking, physical assessment parameters, indications and contraindications for treatment.
 - 4. Pharmacology including drug actions/interactions, side effects, contraindications, and untoward effects.
 - 5. Proper selection, maintenance and utilization of equipment.
 - 6. Realistic and expected outcomes of the procedure(s).
 - 7. Potential complications and side effects of the procedure(s).
 - 8. Management of complications or adverse reactions.
 - 9. Infection control.
 - 10. Safety precautions.
 - 11. Documentation appropriate to the type of the procedure being performed.
 - 12. Supervised clinical practice experience.
 - 13. Competency validation.
- D. Emergency Management
 - 1. All nurses (RN and APRNs) must be trained and equipped to handle medical emergencies including the ability to recognize complications.
 - 2. Equipment to handle emergencies must be available. Recommended emergency supplies include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Vascular occlusion kit (including a minimum of eight (8) vials of hyaluronidase, Aspirin 325 mg, and warm compresses; additional recommended item: Tadalafil 10 mg)
 - ii. Oxygen
 - iii. Epinephrine
 - iv. IV supplies
 - v. Ultrasound guidance or access to ultrasound guidance
 - 3. Clear protocols for emergency medical service activation and transfer of care.
- E. PRACTICE SETTINGS

Aesthetic procedures shall be prescribed by a qualified provider with authorization to prescribe medications or therapeutic devices in the state.
- F. RNs must practice under a patient specific treatment plan written by a qualified provider. Treatment plan must include:
 - 1. Patient name;
 - 2. Patient specific diagnosis;
 - 3. Procedure(s);

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4. Treatment site;
 5. Medication or therapeutic device (when applicable);
 6. Dose or volume (when applicable);
 7. Frequency;
 8. Instructions for emergency and follow-up care; and
 9. Prescriber signature and date.
- G. The qualified provider shall be available to the RN in person or through electronic communications during a procedure. Such provisions shall be contained in the practice setting's standard procedures and protocols.
- H. It is not within the scope of practice of an RN to medically diagnose or to prescribe medications, therapeutic devices and/or treatments. An RN's role in a medical spa would be as a healthcare team member who assists a qualified provider with implementation of the client's individualized treatment plan.
- I. Nurses (RNs and APRNs) practicing in aesthetics are expected to comply with standards for medical documentation and all ASBN Rules pertaining to documentation and adequate medical records.
- J. Medications must be handled, stored, and administered per the manufacturer's insert.
- K. Controlled substances must be stored per the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §801 et seq).
- L. In addition to these requirements, the Arkansas Board of Nursing has published Position Statement 98-6, *Scope of Practice Decision-Making Model* that contains a decision tree chart providing guidance to nurses in determining whether a selected act is within an individual nurse's scope of practice and if education and training are adequate to perform a specified procedure or treatment.

Sources:

Arkansas Nurse Practice Act and Rules. Title 17, Chapter 87. Retrieved from <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-board-of-nursing>.
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Oregon Board of Nursing. Interpretive Statement. The Nurse who Participates in Cosmetic Procedures. April 9, 2020.
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