



Arkansas Department of Health

Arkansas State Board of Nursing

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POSITION STATEMENT

26-1

Role of the Licensed Nurse in the Practice of IV Hydration Services

Purpose

This position statement provides guidance to Arkansas-licensed nurses who practice in IV hydration clinics, mobile IV services, wellness spas, and similar non-traditional settings. Its purpose is to ensure safe, competent nursing care consistent with the Arkansas *Nurse Practice Act* and *ASBN Rules*.

IV hydration clinics offering services such as vitamin infusions, electrolyte replacement, and wellness-focused IV therapies. These services often occur outside traditional healthcare facilities and may involve compounded sterile products, which have been associated with safety risks when prepared or administered under improper conditions.

Nurses practicing in these settings remain fully accountable for safe practice, adherence to federal and state law, and compliance with the Arkansas *Nurse Practice Act* and *ASBN Rules* regardless of business model or employer.

Definitions

- A. Compounding: the act of combining, admixing, diluting, pooling, reconstituting, repackaging, or otherwise altering a drug product or bulk drug substance to create a sterile preparation. Refer to USP 797.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. 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.

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Position Statement

1. Scope of Practice

1. Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs/LPTNs)

- LPNs may perform IV therapy only after documented training and demonstrating validated competency.
- LPNs require supervision by an RN or qualified provider when administering IV hydration or nutrient therapies.
- RNs may not delegate tasks requiring substantial specialized skill, judgment, or knowledge to LPNs, consistent with the *Arkansas Nurse Practice Act* and Position Statement 98-6.

2. Registered Nurses (RNs)

- It is within the RN scope of practice to administer IV fluids, nutrient therapies, and medications pursuant to a valid order from a qualified provider with authorization to prescribe medications in the state.

3. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)

- APRNs may evaluate clients, prescribe IV hydration therapies, and oversee clinical practice consistent with their prescriptive authority and population focus.
- Establishing a patient/provider relationship per *ASBN Rules 17 CAR §123-1201* is required.

2. Requirements for Client Assessment and Orders

- A client-specific order is required for every IV infusion.
 - Components:
 - Assessment criteria to warrant infusion
 - Subjective findings
 - Objective findings
 - Plan of care including medical treatment/pharmaceutical regimen, nursing actions, and follow-up or monitoring requirements
 - Criteria for provider notification
 - Date written

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- Signature of provider
- Assessment for contraindications, allergies, comorbidities, and potential interactions before initiating therapy must be documented in the medical record.
- Patient education related to the treatment and informed consent must be obtained. Informed consent shall ensure the patient understands the nature of the treatment, associated risks, benefits, and alternatives.
- Nurses practicing in IV hydration clinics are expected to comply with standards for medical documentation and all ASBN *Rules* pertaining to documentation and adequate medical records.

3. Competency and Education

Nurses must demonstrate and document attained and maintained competence in:

- Vascular anatomy and physiology
- Fluid and electrolyte balance
- IV insertion and infusion management
- Pharmacology/therapeutic effect of products administered, including side effects
- Aseptic technique
- Recognition and management of complications
- Infusion calculations and pump/gravity regulation
- Emergency response procedures

4. Facility and Environmental Standards

IV hydration clinics must maintain:

- Policies and procedures for IV therapy, emergency response, and medication handling
- IV fluids and any additives must be stored according to manufacturer package insert
- Safe, sanitary environments for preparation and administration
- Compliance with FDA and state regulations regarding compounded sterile products
- Nurses shall not compound medications in violation of Federal and State pharmacy laws

5. Emergency Preparedness

Nurses must be trained and equipped to handle medical emergencies.

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- Immediate availability of emergency equipment (e.g., oxygen, epinephrine, IV access supplies)
- Ability to recognize and manage anaphylaxis, infiltration, fluid overload, and other complications
- Clear protocols for EMS activation and transfer of care

6. Accountability

Nurses are individually accountable for:

- Practicing within their legal scope
- Documentation of nursing care provided
- Maintaining competency
- Ensuring client safety
- Appropriate delegation according to ASBN *Rules* 17 CAR §124-101 et seq.

Employers cannot expand a nurse's scope of practice beyond what Arkansas law permits.

7. Conclusion

Nurses practicing in IV hydration clinics must adhere to Arkansas statutes, ASBN *Rules*, and evidence-based standards to ensure safe, competent care. This position statement affirms that IV hydration therapy is within the scope of practice for appropriately trained RNs and LPNs under proper supervision and an appropriate provider order, with strict adherence to assessment, competency, sanitation, and emergency preparedness requirements.

Sources:

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