



Arizona State Board of Nursing

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An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

OPINION: LUMBAR PUNCTURE
DATE APPROVED: 5/88
REVISED DATE: 10/96, 07/02, 3/06,
1/13, 3/2017, 9/2020
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of RN LPN

ADVISORY OPINION LUMBAR PUNCTURE

It is within the scope of practice for a Registered Nurse (RN) to perform lumbar punctures (LP) on adults only, for diagnostic purposes only (i.e. to obtain a cerebrospinal fluid sample for laboratory testing to assist in determining a diagnosis) if the following requirements are met:

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Written policy and procedures are maintained by agency/employer.
- B. LPs may be performed by RNs on adults defined as: individuals 18 years of age and above.
- C. Only RNs who have completed an agency's instructional program and have successfully completed the supervised clinical practice, may perform lumbar punctures.
- D. Documentation of completion of the instructional program and supervised practice is on file with the employer.
- E. Consideration for use of imaging or ultrasound guided placement to improve patient safety.

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION to include the following:

- A. Anatomy and physiology of the spine, spinal cord and meninges
- B. Indications and Contraindications of the Procedure
- C. Informed consent
- D. Potential adverse reactions or complications, including but not limited to:
 - Intractable post-procedural headache
 - Drainage from the LP site
 - Dural tear that necessitates a patch or closure
 - Spinal hematoma that necessitates emergent surgical evacuation
 - Infectious meningitis
 - Transient lower extremity pain
- E. Techniques of lumbar puncture reflective of most current standards of practice
- F. Appropriate management of comfort/pain/sedation

- G. Associated pharmacology
- H. Associated laboratory data
- I. Documentation requirements
- J. Nursing care responsibilities including patient education and post-procedure instructions

III. RATIONALE

It is recognized that an RN who has completed an extensive instructional program, including supervised clinical practice in lumbar puncture techniques, can safely perform lumbar punctures on adults.

IV. REFERENCES

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