



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: DEBRIDEMENT, CONSERVATIVE SHARP WOUND

APPROVED: 5/93

REVISED DATE: 1/02, 1/06, 8/09, 9/12, 11/15, 1/2019

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:

SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of X RN X LPN

ADVISORY OPINION DEBRIDEMENT, CONSERVATIVE SHARP WOUND

It is within the scope of practice for a registered nurse (RN) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) to perform conservative sharp wound debridement of necrotic tissue if the following requirements are met.

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Written policy and procedure are maintained by the agency/employer
- B. The procedure is performed under the direct supervision of a licensed independent practitioner (LIP)
- C. Only RNs and LPNs who have had supervised clinical practice and have satisfactorily completed an instructional program which may include, but is not limited to an accredited enterostomal therapy nursing education program (ETNEP), wound management specialty course, or a continuing education (CE)-approved course in debridement are allowed to perform sharp wound debridement
- D. Documentation of satisfactory completion of an instructional program and demonstrated clinical proficiency are on file with the agency/employer

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION is to include:

- A. Anatomy and physiology of the integumentary system and the functional relationship of structures such as tendons, nerves and blood vessels
- B. Indications and contraindications for sharp wound debridement
- C. Use of local anesthetics creams
- D. Principles of wound healing and management
- E. Potential complications and adverse reactions of sharp wound debridement
- F. Technique of sharp wound debridement and return demonstration
- G. After care instructions including pain management.
- H. Additional nursing care responsibilities.

III. RATIONALE

RNs and LPNs with documented education and demonstrated proficiency in conservative sharp wound debridement can safely perform this procedure

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. **Direct supervision** is defined as: “the LIP must be immediately available to furnish assistance and direction throughout the performance of the procedure. It does not mean that the LIP must be present in the room when the procedure is performed.”
2. **Non-viable tissue:** Modern medicine debridement may include removing necrotic tissues, foreign debris, bacteria or other devitalized tissue from the wound area. Tissue that is transitioning from viable to devitalized tissue is called slough. Tissue that is completely non-viable is called necrotic tissue.

IV. REFERENCES

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