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**OPINION: ANESTHETIC AGENTS
ADMINISTERED BY REGISTERED NURSES
FOR LIMITED PURPOSES: AIRWAY
MANAGEMENT OR PERIPHERAL NERVE
BLOCK**
APPROVED DATE: 01/03
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ORIGINATING COMMITTEE: ADVANCED
PRACTICE COMMITTEE
REVISING COMMITTEE: SCOPE OF
PRACTICE

Within the Scope of Practice of: LPN RN

ADVISORY OPINION

ANESTHETIC AGENTS ADMINISTERED BY REGISTERED NURSES FOR LIMITED PURPOSES: AIRWAY MANAGEMENT & PERIPHERAL NERVE BLOCK

It is within the scope of practice for a Registered Nurse (RN) to assist a licensed practitioner (LP) by administering anesthetic agents in situations where the LP is present but unable to personally inject the anesthetic agent because the provider is performing these critical tasks for the patient: airway management or placement of a peripheral nerve block requiring the use of both hands.

For the administration of sedation see the: Sedation: Deep, Moderate, and Palliative Advisory Opinion

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. A written policy and procedure is maintained by the employer. The written policy and procedure shall specify the required emergency equipment and medications that must be immediately available to the patient receiving any medication classified as an anesthetic agent. This shall include any and all emergency equipment and medication required to regain and/or maintain the patient's cardiac and respiratory state. These policies and procedures are readily available within the unit where the activity shall occur.
2. The registered nurse is required to have the same knowledge base for the anesthetic agents administered as for any other medication that the registered nurse administers. This knowledge base includes, but is not limited to:
 - A. Assessment and monitoring of the patient receiving the medication.
 - B. Dosing, effects, side effects, and contraindications for each drug to be

- administered.
- C. Potential complications of each drug and/or combination of drugs.
- D. Recognizing emergency situations and instituting appropriate nursing interventions.

RATIONALE

Anesthetic agents are commonly used to facilitate emergent intubation. To require the LP who is managing the patient's airway to leave the airway in order to administer the anesthetic agent compromises patient safety. Similarly, placement of certain types of peripheral nerve blocks may require both hands of the LP to place the needle and keep it in place. To require the LP to use one of their hands to administer the anesthetic agent could again compromise the safety of the patient. Per A.R.S. § 32-1601 (24) (m), it is within the scope of practice of the registered nurse to perform additional acts that require education and training as prescribed by the Board and that are recognized by the nursing profession as proper to be performed by a professional nurse.

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