



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: NEW
APPROVED: 9-15-17
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of RN LPN

ADVISORY OPINION STANDING ORDERS, PROTOCOLS, PRE-PRINTED ORDERS, & ORDER SETS, (ALSO KNOWN AS DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS)

STATEMENT OF SCOPE: It is within the scope of practice of a nurse to implement qualified prescriber “decision support tools” to include administration of medication and other therapeutic procedures following nursing assessment. A prescriber is identified as a licensed independent practitioner (LIP).

Note: In some systems, “decision support tools” (DST) may be titled (but not limited to): “standing orders”, “protocols”, “order sets” and/or “pre-printed orders”, and must meet all the requirements of this statement. Examples of situations in which decision support tools may be utilized include, but are not limited to:

- A. Administration of immunizations and vaccines (with the exception of routine influenza and pneumonia vaccination which do not require an order)
- B. Orders for lab tests or treatments
- C. School health
- D. Correctional settings.
- E. Telephone triage
- F. Health screening activities
- G. Occupational health services

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Since decision support tools are a set of predetermined criteria that define nursing actions in a given situation, they should be written so there is no doubt as to the requirements to implement the order(s).
- B. Decision support tools should be officially approved by the facility policies and procedures.
- C. Nurses who utilize decision support tools should be familiar with employer/agency policies regarding such.

- D. Each nurse must exercise professional responsibility and prudent judgment when using decision support tools.
- E. Decision support tools should include interventions in response to side effects and adverse events related to the implementation of the orders.
- F. Nurses who utilize decision support tools are expected to possess the knowledge and demonstrate competency.
- G. The action within the decision support tool may be acted upon, so long as the patient meets expected assessment; however, the LIP must subsequently authenticate those acted-upon orders.

III. RATIONALE

Standardized decision support tools have been used effectively and safely by nurses for many years in numerous practice settings. These tools refer to very specific orders formulated by LIP's that prescribe the actions the nurse must take for patients related to assessment and diagnostic data.

IV. REFERENCES

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