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## ***Arizona State Board of Nursing***

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**OPINION: WOUND CARE: ROLE OF LPN**  
**APPROVED:**  
**DATE: 1/11**  
**REVISED DATE: 9/2014, 1/2018**  
**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:**  
**SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE**

Within the Scope of Practice of:  RN  LPN

### **ADVISORY OPINION** **WOUND CARE: ROLE OF THE RN AND LPN**

It is within the scope of practice of a registered nurse (RN) to provide wound care, which includes basic and advanced wound care and sharp wound debridement, if the following requirements are met.

It is within the scope of practice of a licensed practical nurse (LPN) to contribute to the initial assessment of wounds through the gathering and recording of assessment data and to perform basic and advanced wound care in collaboration with the RN or licensed independent practitioner (LIP) on an ongoing basis, if the following requirements are met:

#### **I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- A. An RN or LIP is responsible for the comprehensive assessment of the patient and develops the initial and ongoing plan of treatment performed by the LPN
- B. The LPN functions under the supervision of and in collaboration with a RN or LIP
- C. Written policies and procedures are maintained by the employer/agency
- D. Only LPNs who can show satisfactory completion of an instructional program and demonstrate clinical proficiency are allowed to perform basic and advanced wound care and sharp wound debridement

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. *Basic wound care* is defined as care that protects the wound, keeps the wound clean, moist, and well-nourished and keeps pressure off the wound
2. *Advanced wound care* is defined as care of complex wounds including but not limited to open wounds with depth that require packing, ostomies and/or radiation burns. Specialized training is required prior to performing advanced wound care (i.e. classes, in-services, and/or other continuing education courses related to wound care, wound care products, and/or devices)

3. *Sharp wound debridement* is defined as the removal of loose avascular tissue without pain or bleeding

## II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION includes but is not limited to:

### BASIC

- A. Anatomy and physiology of the integumentary system
- B. Understanding wound physiology and wound healing principles
- C. Inspection and evaluation of wound site, including wound measurement
- D. Application of basic wound care products, including but not limited to gauze and/or hydrocolloid dressings
- E. Monitoring and documentation of wound treatment
- F. Notifying the RN and/or LIP of any changes to the clients wound status

### ADVANCED

- A. Staging and treatment of complex wounds
- B. Selection and application of specialty wound care products including, but not limited to maggot therapy and/or alginate wound care products
- C. Management of medical/clinical devices associated with wound care, i.e. negative pressure therapy.

### SHARP WOUND DEBRIDEMENT

- A. Completion of a nationally recognized course and documented certification program prior to performing sharp wound debridement.

## III. RATIONALE

An RN and/or LPN with appropriate education can provide wound care as delegated by an RN and/or LIP. An RN and/or LPN can modify the plan of care in collaboration with an RN and/or LIP based on the identification and communication of changes in the client's status.

Prior to performing these activities, RNs must be able to show satisfactory completion of a formal educational program and demonstrate clinical competency that is validated by a LIP or and RN and function within agency policies addressing the activities.

## IV. REFERENCES

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