



FLORIDA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

POLICY DOCUMENT

LPN SCOPE OF PRACTICE

ISSUE BRIEF

MARCH 2023

Summary

With a severe nursing shortage, states are exploring new avenues to increase the number of nurses and retain their workforce. Allowing licensed practical nurses (LPNs) to perform optimally within their scope of practice may help address staffing challenges in the healthcare setting to meet the demand for care. Allowing LPNs to leverage and utilize the full extent of their training and education can reduce the burden on registered nurses in hospitals and healthcare systems. There is also growing evidence that performing at the top of licensure increases job satisfaction – a key factor in retaining clinical staff.

FHA supports efforts to ensure providers and health care professionals are permitted to practice at the top of their licenses and within their scope of practice. In Florida, LPNs can expand their scope of practice with additional training and certifications such as an IV certification course. Hospitals can support an LPN's enhanced practice by clearly defining their position and responsibilities and offering professional development to ensure knowledge and competency for each role.

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

The Nurses Practice Act, S. 464.003(18), Florida Statutes, outlines the scope of practice of a licensed practical nurse as; "it is the performance of selected acts, including the administration of treatments and medications, in the care of the ill, injured, or infirm; the promotion of wellness, maintenance of health, and prevention of illness of others under the direction of a registered nurse, a licensed physician, a licensed osteopathic physician, a licensed podiatric physician, or a licensed dentist; and the teaching of general principles of health and wellness to the public and to students other than nursing students. A practical nurse is responsible and accountable for making decisions that are based upon the individual's educational preparation and experience in nursing."¹

Licensed practical nurses provide support to doctors and registered nurses in their department by performing limited duties under their authorization. They are legally authorized to administer medications via the following routes: orally, topically, inhalation, or injection.

Under current law, LPNs are prohibited from initiating intravenous fluids (IVs) to patients. Only licensed practical nurses who have received additional training and permission under the direction of a registered nurse or physician may initiate intravenous therapy, with certain exceptions.

¹¹ (2021 Florida Statutes, 2021), [Florida Statute 464.003](#)

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They cannot initiate blood-related products, IV push medications, or mix IV solutions.² If the hospital deems it necessary for the LPNs to perform IVs, additional training is required, and task must be delegated under the direction of a registered nurse or physician. Hospitals wishing to utilize LPNs to initiate IVs must have policies in place requiring additional certification. Even after receiving the certification, the LPN will still be under the clinical oversight and authorization of the RN or medical director.

Approved Programs for IV Certifications

The Board of Nursing (Board) specifies the requirements for LPNs to practice infusion therapy (IVs), pursuant to the Rule 64B9-12.005, Florida Administrative Code, Competency and Knowledge Requirements Necessary to Qualify the LPN to Administer IV Therapy. The Board recognizes that after appropriate education and training, an LPN may perform intravenous therapy under the direction of a registered professional nurse and is approved by the facility to expand the LPNs scope of practice based on the completion of the program.

Appropriate education and training require:

- A minimum of four (4) hours of instruction.
- The requisite four (4) hours of instruction may be included as part of the thirty (30) hours required for intravenous therapy education.
- Training must include, didactic and clinical practicum instruction outlined in rule.
- Skills practicum is recommended, and facility must determine competency with skills checklists.

State Comparisons

Most states, including Florida, prohibit licensed practical nurses from initiating IV therapy to patients unless they receive a certification demonstrating they have completed the required training. After receiving the required certification, the LPN can initiate certain IV therapy for adult patients under the direct supervision or direction of a physician or registered nurse. When states require “under supervision,” a registered nurse or physician is required to be physically in the room during the procedure.

Ohio: According to [Section 4723.18](#), Administration of adult intravenous therapy, a LPN is permitted to perform IV therapy on adult patients under the direction of a licensed physician or registered nurse, but a registered nurse must be in the facility if intervention is needed.

Alabama: LPNs are prohibited from initiating any medications via IV push in any practice setting, unless the facility/agency has applied for a standardized procedure and it has been approved by the Board, per [Administrative Code Rule 610-X-6-.14](#). A registered nurse is required to be physically present in any setting when an LPN performs a push of IV medications.

Washington: LPNs may, under the supervision of a registered nurse, initiate IV medications and fluids provided the LPN has had the appropriate practice and annual documented education.³

² (Rule Chapter: 64B9-12), [Florida Rule Chapter: 64B9-12](#)

³ [Washington Intravenous Therapy by Licensed Practical Nurses](#)