The LPN’s Scope of Practice, reserved and authorized activities

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Presentation Plan

• Context;
• Description of the LPN’s Scope of Practice;
• Explanation of the LPN’s Reserved and authorized activities;
• Reflexion for the students.
Each profession is defined by a scope of practice describing the nature and purpose of its practice and its main activities.

The scope of practice establishes the field of practice and the distinctive mark of the profession.

It also specifies the context for the application of activities reserved for members of a professional order.
LPN’s Scope of practice

Under article 37p) of the Professional Code, the field of practice of LPNs is described as follows:

“Participate in the assessment of a person’s state of health and in carrying out of a care plan, provide nursing and medical care and treatment to maintain or restore health and prevent illness, and provide palliative care.”
A Professional activity is defined as a set of structured interventions that take place in a field of competency.

As described in the *Code des professions*, the LPN has nine reserved activities.

The following pages describe, explain and provide examples of these nine professional activities.
Apply invasive measures for the maintenance of therapeutic equipment

Nursing assistants are responsible for providing maintenance care to the therapeutic equipment used to treat patients. This activity includes “all measures that, if not carried out properly, could lead to the contamination of the equipment installed and could affect the patient’s condition”.

- Irrigation of a nephrostomy
- Maintenance care of an indwelling catheter
- Maintenance of the tracheostomy inner cannula
- Drainage of the peritoneal catheter in dialysis-related care
Take specimens, according to a prescription

In connection with this activity, nursing assistants may take any type of specimens, except for blood specimens by venipuncture, which are covered by another professional activity.

Taking samples of blood by capillary puncture; urine, stool, anal secretions and expectorations; secretions of the conjunctiva, vagina, throat, ears and nose and wound secretions.
Provide care and treatment for wounds and alterations of the skin and teguments, according to a prescription or a nursing plan.

Nursing assistants may provide the full spectrum of care and treatment for wounds and alterations of the skin.

- Applying the initial post-operative dressing
- Proceed to the autolytic debridement of a wound
- Wound treatment using VAC therapy (controlled negative pressure or vacuum)
Observe the state of consciousness of a person and monitor neurological signs.

The nursing assistant observes the patient’s signs, parameters, and reactions.

- Spoken word stimuli
- Pain stimuli
- Pupil reflex
- Muscle function
Mix substances to complete the preparation of a medication, according to a prescription

The nursing assistant may mix substances as required for the preparation of medications that they are legally authorized to administer. Consequently, she may not prepare medications that need to be administered by the intravenous route.

Insulin, vaccines and others
Administer prescribed medications or other prescribed substances via routes other than the intravenous route.

The nursing assistant may administer any type of medications and other substances except via the intravenous route.

- Administration of an analgesic via a subcutaneous catheter
- Administration of bronchodilator by nebulizer (aero therapy)
- Administration of insulin with extracorporeal pump
Participate in vaccination operations under the Public Health Act

After the assessment done by the nurse or the physician, the nursing assistant may prepare and inject immunizing products in the period immediately following. The time lapsed between the assessment and the administration of the immunizing products should not exceed 2 hours. A physician or RN must be present in the institution and easily accessible when the vaccine is administered.

Participate in collecting pre-vaccination information; supervising post-administration and informing RN or physician; Application of emergency measures in the event of immediate reactions

***Consult the "Protocole d’immunisation du Québec (PIQ)" (French only)***
Introduce an instrument or a finger, according to a prescription, beyond the nasal vestibule, labia majora, urinary meatus or anal margin or into an artificial opening in the human body.

This activity determines all of the physiological barriers that may be crossed by the nursing assistant when providing care or treatment.

- Installation of a nasoenteric tube
- Replacement of gastrostomy balloon button
- Stimulation of anal reflex
- Replacement of a suprapubic catheter

[www.oiiaq.org]
Introduce an instrument, according to a prescription, into a peripheral vein in order to take a specimen

This activity permits the nursing assistant to take all types of blood specimens from a peripheral vein, and this, for all patients

Collection of blood specimens by venipuncture on the lower extremities

Blood cultures

Blood specimens on behalf of Hema-Quebec
Time for reflection

What about certain activities? Facing uncertainty, what are the questions to ask yourself?

First example

A nursing assistant works in the current services of the CLSC. She must take vaginal secretion samples for sexually transmissible and blood-borne infections (STBBI) screening test. She must use a vaginal speculum to obtain a sample.

Can this activity be performed by a nursing assistant?

Answer: Yes

Why?

Introduction of a speculum into the vaginal cavity = introduce an instrument or a finger, according to a prescription, beyond the nasal vestibule, labia majora, urinary meatus or anal margin or into an artificial opening in the human body

Vaginal secretion samples = Taking samples according to a prescription
**Second example**

A nursing assistant works in a palliative care home. She must install a soft subcutaneous catheter to administer regularly and intermittently prescribed opioid analgesics to a patient.

May this activity be performed by the nursing assistant?

**Answer:** Yes

**Why?**

*Administer a subcutaneous opioid analgesic* = Administer prescribed medications or other prescribed substances via routes other than the intravenous route.

*Introduce a soft subcutaneous catheter* = She may introduce and use various processes and devices, including pumps, butterfly needles and misters (Professional activities of Licensed Practical Nurses, p.12)
Third example

A nursing assistant works on a surgical unit. To proceed to the complete surgical wound closure of a patient, the physician prescribed the removal of the closed drainage systems, Hemovac type.

May this activity be performed by the nursing assistant?

Answer: Yes

Why?

Removal of a wound drainage system= Provide care and treatment for wounds and alterations of the skin and teguments, according to a prescription or a nursing plan.

Introduce an instrument or a finger, according to a prescription, beyond the nasal vestibule, labia majora, urinary meatus or anal margin or into an artificial opening in the human body.

**This activity speaks of "introducing" but it also includes "withdrawing"
Other activities which belong to other groups of professionals may, by regulation, be performed by another professional. It is the case of the nursing assistant’s contribution to the administration of intravenous therapy.

- Install a short peripheral intravenous catheter measuring less than 7.5 centimetres;
- Administer an intravenous solution without additives using a short peripheral intravenous catheter measuring less than 7.5 centimetres
- Install and irrigate a short intermittent injection intravenous catheter, measuring less than 7.5 centimetres, with an isotonic solution
Since 2008, the activity below that was reserved to nurses is now authorised to nursing assistants.

**Contributing to intravenous therapy**

This activity allows the nursing assistant to install and irrigate a short peripheral intravenous catheter and to administer an intravenous solution without additives using a short peripheral intravenous catheter.

**Condition:**
- In a public institution
- For clients 14 years old or older

- Check intravenous infusions and maintain the flow rate by gravity or via volumetric pump
- Stop an intravenous infusion and remove a short peripheral intravenous catheter
Time for reflection

During your first year of training, what are the care techniques that you have learned in the following competencies of the program of study?

- Basic care procedures
- Care procedures and the musculoskeletal system
- Infection control
- Drug therapy
- Care procedures and the nervous and sensory systems
- Care procedures and the endocrine system
- Cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- Care procedures and the digestive system
- Care procedures and the urinary and reproductive systems

Do the exercise to combine care techniques learned as part of your training to the professional activities reserved for nursing assistants.
Reflexion for the students

**Time for reflection**

- Have you ever done a clinical where certain techniques were not performed by nursing assistants?
- During your clinical, are there techniques that you had not learned in school?
- Did such technique fall within the scope of practice of the nursing assistant?
- Did you review the list of authorised activities in the health institution where you had a clinical?
- What are the measures to take prior to undertaking a technique for the first time?
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