



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Board of Nursing

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QUESTION: Is it within the role and scope of responsibilities of the registered nurse (RN) in the emergency department of a health care agency to be responsible for patient triage and discharge from the emergency department without physician order?

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina acknowledges that it is within the role and scope of responsibilities of the RN to perform patient triage in the Emergency Department. The nurse's responsibility for triage requires the use of judgment in identifying the patient's health problem and estimating its severity in determining priority of patient need.

Since it is **NOT** the role of the RN to establish medical diagnoses, it is therefore **NOT** within the role and scope of responsibilities of the RN to discharge patients from the Emergency Department without a physician's order.

This statement is an advisory opinion of the Board of Nursing as to what constitutes competent and safe nursing practice.