



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation  
**South Carolina Board of Nursing**  
110 Centerview Dr. • Columbia • SC • 29210  
P.O. Box 12367 • Columbia • SC 29211-2367  
Phone: 803-896-4550 • NURSEBOARD@llr.sc.gov • Fax: 803-896-4515  
llr.sc.gov/nurse

### **ADVISORY OPINION # 55**

**FORMULATED:** January 2011

**REVISED:** July 2021, March 2018, November 2013, September 2013

**REVIEWED:** July 2024

**QUESTION:** What is the role and scope of responsibilities for the registered nurse (RN) to administer fentanyl intravenously for pain management?

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina acknowledges that it is within the role and scope of the responsibilities of the RN to administer fentanyl IV for pain control when ordered by a licensed physician, dentist, or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) *or other licensed providers authorized to prescribe by law*. THIS ADVISORY OPINION DOES NOT APPLY TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF AGENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEDATION MANAGEMENT. (See Advisory Opinion #25)

However, fentanyl is considered an extra potent narcotic that evokes a larger response at low concentrations (i.e. mcg vs mg) and should only be given in settings that the patient response and condition can be monitored closely.

The Board recommends that each organization has an educational credentialing mechanism which includes a process for evaluation and documenting the individual RN's competency relative to the management of the patient receiving intravenous pain medications.

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