



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Board of Nursing

110 Centerview Drive • Columbia • SC • 29210

P.O. Box 12367 • Columbia • SC • 29211

Phone: 803-896-4550 • NURSEBOARD@LLR.SC.GOV • Fax: 803-896-4515

www.llronline.com/pol/nursing



ADVISORY OPINION #66

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REVIEWED:

QUESTION: Is it within the scope of practice of the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) who holds Prescriptive Authority to use Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) as a treatment option for the management of sexually transmitted infections as endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention?

Laws Governing Nursing in South Carolina permits APRNs with prescriptive authority to prescribe medications.

SECTION 40-33-20 (5) defines an "Advanced Practice Registered Nurse" or "APRN" as a registered nurse who is prepared for an advanced practice registered nursing role by virtue of additional knowledge and skills gained through an advanced formal education program of nursing in a specialty area that is approved by the board.

SECTION 40-33-20 (18) states a "Certified Nurse-Midwife" or "CNM" means an advanced practice registered nurse who holds a master's degree in the specialty area, maintains an American Midwifery Certification Board certificate, and is trained to provide management of women's health care from adolescence beyond menopause, focusing on gynecologic and family planning services, preconception care, pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, care of the normal newborn during the first twenty-eight days of life, and the notification and treatment of partners for sexually transmitted infections.

SECTION 40-33-34 (D)(1) Medical acts performed by a nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist must be performed pursuant to a practice agreement between the nurse and the physician or medical staff.

SECTION 40-33-34 (F)(1) indicates authorized prescriptions by a nurse practitioner, certified nurse-midwife, or clinical nurse specialist with prescriptive authority: (a) must comply with all applicable state and federal laws and executive orders; (b) is limited to drugs and devices utilized to treat medical problems within the specialty field of the nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist, as prescribed in the practice agreement.

EPT is the treatment of partners of patients diagnosed with Chlamydia or Gonorrhea by providing a prescription to the partners without a provider examination or a provider – patient relationship.

In accordance with such legislation, because EPT involves providing treatment to partners who have not been examined nor have a patient – provider relationship, as stipulated in the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners Practice Act Section 40-47-117

- (A) It is unprofessional conduct for a licensee initially to prescribe drugs to an individual without first establishing a proper physician - patient relationship.
 - (1) personally perform and document an appropriate history and physical examination, make a diagnosis, and formulate a therapeutic plan
 - (2) discuss with the patient the diagnosis and the evidence for it, and the risks and benefits of various treatment options; and
 - (3) ensure the availability of the licensee or coverage for the patient for appropriate follow-up care.

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina does not endorse the use of EPT as a treatment option for APRNs who hold prescriptive authority for the management of select sexually transmitted infections as listed in practice agreements.

This statement is an advisory opinion of the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina as to what constitutes competent and safe Advanced Practice Registered Nurse practice.