



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Board of Nursing

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ADVISORY OPINION # 74

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REVISED:

REVIEWED:

QUESTION: Is it within the role and scope of practice of the obstetric registered nurse (RN) to act as Qualified Medical Personnel to conduct a Medical Screening Exam as allowed by EMTALA on obstetric patients presenting with a complaint of uterine contractions (labor) to the obstetric department?

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina acknowledges that it is within the scope and practice of the obstetric registered nurse RN to act as Qualified Medical Personnel to conduct Medical Screening Exams on obstetric patients presenting with a complaint of labor as allowed by the facility's policies, rules and regulations, and/or medical staff bylaws

It is NOT within the scope and practice of the obstetric registered nurse RN to act as Qualified Medical Personnel to conduct Medical Screening Exams on obstetric patients presenting with complaints in addition to or other than labor.

According to CMS's State Operations Manual Appendix V, Interpretive Guidelines – Responsibilities of Medicare Participating Hospitals in Emergency Cases, and if approved by the healthcare facility under the rules governing EMTALA, qualified labor and delivery obstetric nurses may act as a “qualified medical personnel” (QMP) to perform a medical screening examination (MSE) required by EMTALA under the defined conditions as established by the facility, having satisfied the qualifications required for each condition.

After completion of the MSE, the qualified Obstetric nurse acting as a QMP, should communicate the findings with the licensed provider to determine a disposition. In cases in which a QMP Obstetric nurse is permitted by the facility's policy, rules and regulations or bylaws to perform the MSE and does so, the disposition of the patient is determined by the institution's medical staff member with obstetrical privileges, who gives the order to admit or discharge the patient as appropriate

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