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South Carolina
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Board of Nursing



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POSITION STATEMENT: Use of Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)

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REVISED:

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Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT), “is the clinical practice of treating the sex partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea by providing prescriptions or medications to the patient to take to his/her partner without the health care provider first examining the partner.”¹ “This allows partners to receive treatment quickly and prevents the need for a potentially complicated notification process” and is effective in preventing reinfection and curtailing further transmission.²

In March 2015, the Board of Nursing issued Advisory Opinion #66 (rev. 2018) regarding the scope of practice for an APRN (NP, CNM, CNS). In Advisory Opinion #66, the Board of Nursing concluded that it was unprofessional conduct for a licensee initially to prescribe drugs to an individual without first establishing a proper practitioner-patient relationship, including performing an appropriate history, physical examination, diagnosis, and therapeutic plan, and discussing the diagnosis and treatment plan with the patient.

In February 2021, the Board of Medical Examiners interpreted South Carolina Code Ann. § 40-47-113(B) and concluded that the Medical Practice Act does not preclude the use of EPT. Pursuant to its interpretation of that section, the Board of Medical Examiners concluded that EPT is permissible under South Carolina law and that it is not unprofessional conduct for a licensee to use EPT.³

Similarly, the Board of Nursing determines it is not unprofessional conduct for an APRN, who holds prescriptive authority for the management of select sexually transmitted infections as listed in practice agreements, to engage in the use of EPT for the treatment of sexual partners of patients diagnosed with genital chlamydia and gonorrhea, in accordance with CDC guidelines in effect at the time of treatment.

¹ Expedited Partner Therapy, CDC, available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/ept/default.htm>

² *Id.*

³ <https://llr.sc.gov/med/PDF/EPT%20Position%20Statement.pdf>