



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS

MODEL RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR CNS TITLE PROTECTION AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE

1. Title

A person who meets all the requirements contained in the definition section may use the title Clinical Nurse Specialist and the initials CNS.

2. Definition

A Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) independently provides theory and research-based care to clients in facilitating attainment of health goals, works with nurses to advance nursing practice to improve outcomes cost-effectively, and/or provides clinical expertise to affect system-wide changes in organizations to improve programs of care. The CNS is a currently licensed registered professional nurse who:

A. Has completed a graduate degree (masters or doctoral) or a post-masters certificate from a program which prepares graduates to practice as CNSs and includes a minimum of 500 clinical practice hours in the CNS specialty and which is accredited by a board-accepted national nursing accrediting body, and

B. Meets all other (name of state board of nursing) requirements to practice as a clinical nurse specialist.

3. Scope of Practice

The CNS provides advanced levels of direct and indirect nursing care as defined by the (name of state board) and assists other nurses and health professionals in both establishing and meeting health goals of individuals and populations of patients.

A.

In the provision of direct care services, the CNS:

1. Integrates advanced knowledge of wellness, illness, self-care, disease, and medical therapeutics in a holistic assessment of persons while focusing on the nursing diagnosis of symptoms, functional problems, and risk behaviors that have etiologies requiring nursing interventions to prevent, maintain, or alleviate,
2. Utilizes assessment data, research, and theoretical knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate nursing interventions that integrate delegated medical treatments as needed, and
3. Prescribes or orders durable medical and consumable equipment and supplies when such equipment and supplies are self-care assistive devices or assist in the delivery of quality nursing care.

B. In the provision of indirect care services, the CNS:

1. Serves as a consultant to other nurses and healthcare professionals in managing highly complex patient care problems and in achieving quality, cost-effective outcomes for populations of patients across settings,
2. Provides leadership in appropriate use of research/evidence in practice innovations to improve patient care,
3. Develops, plans, and directs programs of care for individuals and populations of patients and provides direction to nursing personnel and

- others in these programs of care,
 - 4. Evaluates patient outcomes and cost-effectiveness of care to identify needs for practice improvements within the clinical specialty or program, and
 - 5. Serves as a leader of multidisciplinary groups in designing and implementing alternative solutions to patient care issues across the continuum of care.

- 4. Standards for Clinical Nurse Specialist Scope of Practice

In addition to following the standards for the registered nurse, the CNS is responsible for standards of advanced practice, which include but are not limited to:

 - A. Providing nursing services that are within the scope of nursing specialty practice for which he or she is educationally prepared and maintained through educational preparation such as academic course work, workshops or seminars, and/or other supervised, planned learning that includes theory and clinical experience
 - B. Recognizing limits of knowledge, competence and experience and consulting with or referring clients to other healthcare providers when appropriate.
 - C. Adheres to the ethical standards articulated by the profession for advanced practice nurses.

- 5. General Regulations Relating to Clinical Nurse Specialists
 - A. Requirements for recognition to practice:
 - 1. Submits evidence of successful completion of a master's or doctoral degree program or post-masters certificate in a clinical specialty area from an accredited school of nursing. The program's objective(s) must be for the preparation of nurses to practice as Clinical Nurse Specialists.

- 6. Requirements for Continuing Recognition to Practice

Request for continuing recognition to practice is concurrent with renewal of the registered nurse license and all appropriate regulations for Clinical Nurse Specialist Practice

- 7. General Regulations Relating to Prescriptive and Dispensing Authority for Clinical Nurse Specialists

The CNS who applies for medication prescriptive authority must meet the requirements established by the board:

 - A. Complies with Regulation 2 Definition
 - B. Successful completion of a master's or doctoral degree program or post-masters certificate in a clinical specialty area from an accredited school of nursing that prepares graduates to practice as a CNS.
 - C. Submits evidence of certification as a Clinical Nurse Specialist as required by the board of nursing, is approved for a waiver of certification, or submits evidence considered by the SBON to be equivalent when no appropriate certification exam exists for the specialty; and submits other evidence as required by the board such as a psychometrically sound externally evaluated portfolio of evidence demonstrating knowledge and skill competence in the specialty
 - D. Complies with all SBON regulations required for prescriptive authority.

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