RN SCOPE OF PRACTICE DECISION TREE

Resource Documents*
- Georgia Nurse Practice Act OCGA 43-26-1
- Georgia Rules and Regulations (Chapter 410-1)
- Professional Standards of Practice (generally found through professional and specialty organizations (ANA, GNA, etc.)
- Organizational/institutional policies, procedures and guidelines
- RN Assignment Decision Tree (when available)

*Please note the following: Not intended to be exclusive list and appropriate documentation is imperative at each step of this model consistent with your professional guidelines and institutions. At any point a written request or phone call may be sent to the Georgia Board of Nursing for an opinion.

1. Is activity/task in OCGA 43-26-1 (The Nurse Practice Act of the State of Georgia), Georgia Board of Rules & Regulations (Chapter 410-1)?

   Yes                      No                      Unsure/Not Defined
   ↓                         ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 Consult resources
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Continue
   No — Stop immediately. Do the rules address your specific situation? Yes, proceed accordingly.
   Unsure/Not Defined — Consult additional resources (examples listed). Consult qualified individuals such as: supervisor, colleague, professor, etc.

2. Is activity/task supported by research, position, and scope of practice statements by National Nursing Organizations or community or institutional related health field?

   Yes                      No                      Not Defined
   ↓                         ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 STOP
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Continue to next step.
   No — Stop immediately.
   This activity is not within your scope of practice.

3. Is the activity/task consistent with organizational policies or procedures?

   Yes                      No
   ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 STOP
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Continue to next step.
   No — Stop and seek clarification of orders. If necessary, develop policies and procedures if appropriate in your organization.

4. Do you possess the current knowledge and skill required to perform the activity/task and is it documented in your work environment?

   Yes                      No
   ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 STOP
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Continue.
   No — Stop. It is important that your skills and ability are previously verified and documented in your file. If not, obtain the necessary education and demonstrate your competency. As appropriate, seek assistance from competent colleagues to accomplish task.

5. Would a reasonable and prudent nurse perform this activity in this setting?

   Yes                      No
   ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 STOP
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Continue.
   No — Stop. The RN should consider the available human and material resources that may vary in practice settings such as in Long Term Care as compared to Hospice or other acute care settings.

6. Are you prepared to accept the responsibility for your action?

   Yes                      No
   ↓                         ↓
   Continue                 STOP
   Consult Chain of Command

   Yes — Perform the activity.
   No — Stop! Document, communicate to appropriate sources.

NOTE: This process is not intended to replace good communication to all parties concerned.
RN Assignment Decision Tree
Assignment to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP)

NO  ↓  Do NOT assign

Is the care and activity to be performed based upon orders or directions of a licensed physician, licensed dentist, licensed podiatrist, or person licensed to practice nursing as a registered professional nurse?

YES  ↓  Do NOT assign

Does performance of the task require licensure in another health care profession?

No  ↓

YES  ↓  Do NOT assign

Does the task require the knowledge and skills of a person practicing nursing as a registered professional nurse?

Unsure  ↓

YES  ↓  Do NOT assign

Does the client's health status and situation involve complex observations or critical decisions that require the knowledge and skills of a professional nurse?

No  ↓

NO  ↓  Do NOT assign

Can the task be safely performed according to exact, unchanging directions?

Yes  ↓

NO  ↓  Do NOT assign

Are the results of the task reasonably predictable?

Yes  ↓

NO  ↓  Do NOT assign

Has the RN verified that the UAP has the knowledge and skills necessary to accept assignment?

Yes  ↓  May assign

May assign