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OPINION: PCA BY PROXY
APPROVED DATE: October 2005
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ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
 Practice & Education Committee

An advisory opinion adopted by WSNB is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of WSNB regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and/or decrease risk.

Within the Scope of Practice/Role of APRN RN LPN CNA

ADVISORY OPINION PCA BY PROXY

In accordance with Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 33-21-122(c)(iii) of the Wyoming Nursing Practice Act (NPA), the Wyoming State Board of Nursing (WSBN) has approved the following Advisory Opinion on PCA By Proxy.

It is within the scope of practice for an appropriately trained and competent RN to administer pain medication via a patient controlled device in certain patient care scenarios, such as the ICU setting, palliative care and during patient transport. The following criteria must be met:

- a) **There are institutional policies and procedures to guide this practice;**
- b) **The nurse has completed training and demonstrated continuing competency;**
- c) **The agency/facility maintains documentation on training and competency on each nurse;**
- d) **The care is provided is under the direction of a physician, APRN or PA; and**
- e) **The patient's condition is assessed prior to, during, and after the procedure according to current standard of practice.**

The Joint Commission, with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) and the United States Pharmacopeia (USP), makes the following recommendations to guide safe practice:

1. Develop criteria for selecting appropriate patients to receive PCA and nurse-controlled analgesia. This criteria-based selection process should consider the risk that PCA by proxy might occur. When assessing a patient for nurse-controlled analgesia, identify risk factors such as age, weight, pre-existing conditions including allergies, and current medication use that may suggest increased monitoring.
2. Carefully monitor and observe patients. Oximetry and/or capnography monitoring may be appropriate in some cases.

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- Joint Commission Perspectives on Patient Safety. Focus on five: preventing patient controlled analgesia overdose. Let eligible patients keep control. Jt Comm Perspect. 2005; 5 (10): 11.
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- Wuhrman E, Cooney MF, Dunwoody CJ, Esterowicz N, Merkel S, Oakes LL. Authorized and unauthorized (PCA by Proxy) dosing of analgesic infusion pumps: position statement with clinical practice recommendations. Pain Manag Nurs. 2007; 8 (1): 4-11.