



Wyoming State Board of Nursing

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**OPINION: ROLE OF NURSES IN SUPERFICIAL WOUND CLOSURE AND POST CARE**

**APPROVED DATE:** February 16, 2016

**REVIEWED DATE:** July 2016

**REVISED DATE:** January 2018

**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:**

Practice Committee

An advisory opinion adopted by WSBN 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 WSBN 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  
ROLE OF NURSES IN SUPERFICIAL WOUND CLOSURE AND POST CARE**

In accordance with Wyo. Stat. §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 the Role of Nurses in Superficial Wound Closure.

The performance of superficial wound closure using suturing, stapling or topical skin adhesives such as Dermabond® is within the scope of practice for the licensed registered nurse (RN) as ordered by a physician, APRN or PA if the following criteria are 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 for each nurse;
- D. The care is provided under the direction of a physician, APRN or PA; and
- E. The patient's condition is assessed prior to, during, and after the procedure to current standard of practice.

It is not considered appropriate for the RN to suture fascia, muscle, nerve, tendon or blood vessels unless the RN meets the definition and competency of a Registered Nurse First Assist (RNFA).

The removal of superficial wound closure sutures, staples or topical skin adhesives such as Dermabond® is within the scope of practice for the licensed registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN)\* as ordered by a physician, APRN or PA if the following criteria are 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 for each nurse;
- D. The care is provided under the direction of a physician, APRN or PA; and
- E. The patient's condition is assessed prior to, during, and after the procedure to current standard of practice.

It is not appropriate for the RN or LPN\* to remove closures from fascia, muscle, nerve, tendon or blood vessels.

## REFERENCES

Arkansas Board of Nursing. (2014). *The Performance of Stapling, Suturing, or Application of Tissue Adhesive for Superficial Wound Closure by Registered Nurses in the Emergency Department*. Retrieved from: <http://www.arsbn.arkansas.gov/forms/Documents/PositionStatement14.1.May2014.pdf>

Maine State Board of Nursing. (n.d.). *Suturing Practice Questions Related to the Registered Professional Nurse*. Retrieved from: [http://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/questions/questions\\_rn.html#sutures](http://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/questions/questions_rn.html#sutures)

Nebraska Board of Nursing. (2014). *Suturing and Skin Adhesives: Wound Closure and Anchoring*. Retrieved from: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Licensure/Documents/SuturingAdhesivesAnchoring.pdf>