

## PRACTICAL NURSE II

This is specialized practical nursing work in the care and treatment of clients, under nursing supervision. Employees in any work environment should spend at least 50% of the time in the following higher level duties.

This work has been identified in inpatient and clinic settings in the Department of Human Resources, Department of correction, University infirmaries, and N. C. Memorial Hospital. In these environments, practical nurses perform Practical Nurse I duties and the following higher level duties under nursing supervision: assigned to care for the acutely ill or severe chronic patients who require comprehensive nursing care and extensive observation; delivers respiratory therapy treatments and care as suctioning, tracheotomy care, medications, client teaching; observes cardiac monitors, respirators, etc., and reports any changes; assists the physician with special procedures as thoracentesis and biopsies; gives medications (oral, IM), observes client for reactions, and records pertinent information; observes and discontinues (infiltrated) intravenous infusion as needed; and assists and observes subordinate employees in providing general patient care.

In a local public health department, the practical nurse is assigned a significant amount of time in home visitation and/or outreach, School Health, and/or clinic administrative support duties to be at this level. All roles require varied community contacts and client teaching. In home visits, outreach, and School Health work, the employee may perform the following duties under nursing supervision: provides basic patient care, checks vital signs and medications, delivers routine physical exercises, changes and irrigates catheters, counsels with and instructs the client and family, visits for clinic and program follow-up, changes aseptic dressings, observes client's condition and environment, and reports routinely to the supervising nurse on the care delivered and changes in a client's condition. In a clinic setting, the practical nurse will have duties similar to the Practical Nurse I and in addition will perform routine laboratory work, take a lead role in preparing and coordinating the clinic, and educate and instruct clients and family, under a supervising nurse.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Work assignments are varied and require greater judgment in the application of practical nursing knowledge. This level of work may require specialized or in-depth knowledge and skills as in basic medical technology, respiratory therapy, pharmacology, or the principles and practices of public health.

Guidelines - Patient care protocols within limits of local policies are well established and understood. Daily or weekly work assignments may vary the duties and types of client contacts more often than the Practical Nurse I. The employee will have to deal with emergency situations and report to the supervising nurse as soon as possible.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Employees have some opportunity for taking actions which represent and reflect upon the agency, especially if employed a considerable amount of time in a program as Home Health where there is less on-site supervision or with clients where there is a greater opportunity for unusual or emergency situations.

Consequence of Action - The employee's actions could result in significant discomfort to the client population served.

Review - Work is reviewed occasionally by the supervisor while work is in progress, and upon completion through observation, written reports and examination of results.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject matter - The information exchanged between the practical nurse and the clients and family may not be accepted or understood.

Purpose - Information is being gathered or explained. Conflicts and problems are referred to others.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Nature of Working Conditions – Working conditions may be mildly stressful or disagree depending on the work environment and the type of client.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards – Clients may be verbally abusive at times due to illness and senility, and on occasion may attempt physical harm.

V. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities – Considerable knowledge of practical nursing techniques and the routine care and treatment of all types of clients, and the ability to apply it to the area of work; considerable knowledge of sanitation, personal hygiene, basic health and safety practices applicable to the area of work; skill in preparing and administering medications, and general knowledge of proper dosage, effects, and contraindications; and skill in the operation of general and specialized equipment used in the area of assignment and general knowledge of the equipment's function. Ability to make astute observations of patient's conditions and to report conditions and changes accurately; ability to remain calm and function efficiently in emergency and stressful situations; ability to understand, interpret, and relate oral and written instructions; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with patients and families, and other employees.

Minimum Education and Experience – Graduation from a state accredited program of practical nurse education and one year of practical nurse experience, which includes advanced or inservice training in the area to which assigned; or graduation from a state accredited program of practical nurse education including a pharmacology course, or completion of an approved pharmacology course upon graduation, which provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the administration of medications required by the work setting (typically in a hospital, infirmary, or mental retardation center); or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Necessary Special Qualification – Licensed to practice as a practical nurse in North Carolina by the NC Board of Nursing.