California School Nurses Organization

Position Statement

LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES IN SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

STATEMENT

The California School Nurses Organization endorses the employment and appropriate assignment of Licensed Vocational Nurses, (LVNs) to assist the credentialed school nurse, including assisting with medication administration and the provision of specialized physical health care services. Safe assignment of health services to students requires that the credentialed school nurse utilize professional nursing judgment to:

- Obtain and assess the accuracy and appropriateness of California licensed health care provider’s orders and parent consent for health care procedures or medications.
- Develop an Individualized School Health Plan, (ISHP), 504 Plan and/or Emergency Care Plan in collaboration with family, health care providers, school team, and student.
- Determine the level of care and supervision necessary to insure the safety of the student receiving medication or specialized health care procedure.
- Ensure that non-credentialed RN’s and LVN’s working in School Health Services are able to contact the credentialed school nurse at any time for direction and assistance, having Indirect Supervision at all times.
- Provide both standardized and child-specific training prior to assignment of the service.
- Monitor and document the competency and performance of the LVN no less frequently than annually and more frequently as determined by the performance of the LVN and the complexity of the procedure.
- Supervise non-credentialed RNs and LVNs on a frequent, regular basis.
- Review the written plan at least annually for any modifications or changes.
- Provide clear information to all school staff and parents as to the role responsibilities of the credentialed school nurse, non-credentialed RN, and LVN in the school setting.

RATIONALE

Due to advances in medical technology and increased integration of students with specialized health needs into regular classrooms, there are more such students attending their neighborhood schools. Federal law mandates that students with health related disabilities have access to appropriate educational programs and related services. The credentialed school nurse, as the school health professional, is the only school staff member qualified and legally authorized to determine the plan for delivery of specialized physical health care services.

(This Position Statement is continued on next page)
It is imperative that the credentialed school nurse has the decision-making authority, administrative support, supervisory responsibility and necessary resources to ensure safe care for students. Certain procedures that require nursing assessment or monitoring can only legally be performed by a Registered Nurse or delegated to a Licensed Vocational Nurse, including, but not limited to, insulin injections via syringe or pump device, reinserting the insulin pump device, reinserting a nasogastric or gastrostomy feeding tube and the administration of other medications that are not legally authorized or that require nursing judgment or assessment.

Definitions:

1. Licensed Credentialed School Nurse (school nurse): is a registered nurse, licensed by the California State Board of Registered Nursing, as defined in #2 below. The school nurse holds a baccalaureate or higher degree from a college/university and a School Nurse Services credential from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The credential is granted after the registered nurse completes a Commission-approved post-graduate school nurse program.

2. Registered Nurse (RN): a graduate of a formal nursing program (two year associate degree or four year baccalaureate degree), who is legally authorized (licensed) to practice nursing by the California State Board of Registered Nursing after passing the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

3. Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN): a graduate of a vocational nursing program (12 – 24 months after completion of high school education or equivalent), who is legally authorized (licensed) to practice vocational nursing by the California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians after passing a national vocational nursing examination. The LVN must practice under the direction of a physician or registered nurse and is not an independent practitioner.

4. Direct supervision means that the supervisor shall be present in the same building as the person being supervised and available for consultation and/or assistance.

5. Indirect supervision means that the supervisor is available to the qualified designated school personnel, either in person or through electronic means to provide necessary guidance, consultation and referral to appropriate care and services as needed.

References:


California Education Code Section 49423.

(This Position Statement is continued on next page)
Licensing LVN Fact Sheet California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians
Retrieved from http://www.bvnpt.ca.gov


*Adopted:* 11/11 Board of Directors, California School Nurses Organization