



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
South Carolina Board of Nursing
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ADVISORY OPINION # 46

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QUESTION: Is it within the role and scope of responsibilities of the licensed practical nurse (LPN) to evaluate and/or stage vascular, diabetic/ neuropathic or pressure ulcers?

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina recognizes that it is **NOT** within the role and scope of the licensed practical nurse (LPN) to evaluate and/or stage vascular, diabetic/neuropathic or pressure ulcers. However, the LPN may collect and document health data related to vascular, diabetic /neuropathic and/or pressure ulcer(s) in order to assist the RN with decisions regarding wound classification/stage and continued management. The LPN deemed clinically competent may apply compression wraps, remove wound drains and attend to the application of wound dressings and wound vacs.

The Board has determined that the analysis and synthesis of clinical information to determine wound classification/stage and the formulation of problem statements, nursing diagnoses and treatment plans related to vascular, diabetic/neuropathic and pressure ulcers requires the knowledge base and skills that are within the scope of practice of the registered nurse (RN) and may not be delegated to the licensed practical nurse (LPN).

The Board recommends that agency policies and procedures address:

- Required education, training and ongoing competency evaluation for LPNs collecting / documenting health data related to vascular, diabetic/neuropathic and/or pressure ulcers.
- Supervisory requirements for LPNs by the RN with regard to frequency of the RN's wound assessment and reassessments.
- The LPN participates in the ongoing assessment, development and modification of the plan/strategy of care.

This statement is an advisory opinion of the South Carolina Board of Nursing as to what constitutes competent and safe nursing practice.