



Perioperative Care: Specialized Area of LPN Practice

Introduction:

Section 21.4(1) of the SALPN Regulatory Bylaws classifies “perioperative care” as a specialized area of practice. It is defined as “the provision of practical nursing care to patients in a perioperative setting and provides assistance to an authorized practitioner who is performing surgery in an operating theatre”.

Licensed Practical Nurses in the perioperative care specialized area prepared with the integrated knowledge, skills, ability, critical thinking, and judgment required for the delivery of comprehensive patient care within the preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative period of the patient’s experience in the operating room. Perioperative LPNs provide care to pediatric and adult patients throughout the life span and health continuum, including acute and chronic patient care.

Background:

Section 21.4 of the SALPN Regulatory Bylaws provides as follows:

(2) No member shall provide perioperative care unless the member:

(a) has successfully completed the formal post-basic education certificate program in perioperative practical nursing, known as the “Perioperative Nursing LPN/ Advanced Certificate ” from the Saskatchewan Polytechnic, or an equivalent program recognized by council;

(b)) is registered with SALPN as qualified to provide perioperative care;

(c) practises in accordance with the *Standards of Practice and Competencies for Perioperative Licensed Practical Nurses* approved and adopted by Canadian regulatory agencies as of December 2010; and

(d) practises pursuant to an order of an authorized professional and in collaboration with other members of the health care team.

An LPN who performs perioperative care without having acquired the necessary education, being registered as qualified with the SALPN or without the direction or order of an authorized professional, or non-collaboratively would be in breach of the bylaws and therefore guilty of professional misconduct as defined in section 24 of *The Licensed*

Program Recognition and Registration with the SALPN

1. On proof of completion of the “Perioperative Nursing LPN/ Advanced Practice Certificate” course from Saskatchewan Polytechnic the SALPN will register the LPN as educated in the perioperative care specialized area of LPN practice.
2. An LPN who has completed an equivalent educational program that provides the LPN with the competencies required to practice perioperative care can apply to Council for recognition of the program. Once Council recognizes the program, the SALPN will register the LPN as educated in the perioperative care specialized area of LPN practice.

Practice Guidelines:

1. LPNs provide perioperative care to a variety of patients in an operating room theatre setting in the circulating or scrub role. LPNs will work autonomously in the perioperative care setting while taking care of the pediatric patients to the elderly.

Scrub Role- A scrub nurse assembles the needed instruments and supplies in a manner to maximize safety and efficiency. This role requires an in-depth knowledge of each step of the surgical procedure and the certain ability to anticipate each and every movement. The scrub nurse will prepare, assemble and position each instrument on a sterile field as it will be used and quickly transferred to the surgeon, often without being asked.

Circulating Role- In a collaborative role the LPN uses the nursing process to assess the patient, identify the desired outcomes, formulate nursing diagnosis, advocate the plan of care, implement interventions, and evaluate the outcomes of the care provided.

The SALPN does not require LPNs to obtain perioperative certification for roles outside of the traditional operating room theatre such as, but not limited to, ambulatory care settings, emergency rooms and surgeon’s offices.

2. The LPN who provides perioperative care requires an order from an authorized professional in order to implement the medical treatments entailed within this specialty area.
3. The LPN who provides perioperative care must work in collaboration with other members of the health care team. Within the perioperative nursing team, LPNs will perform the circulating or scrub role only when a Registered Nurse is present in the primary circulating role.
4. The LPN who provides perioperative care will ensure that the appropriate health professional is consulted when the required care needs of the patient exceeds the competence of the LPN provider.

Competencies:

SALPN recognizes education that encompasses the following:

1. Authorizations and Standards

- **Demonstrate knowledge and application of Canadian Council of Practical Nurse Regulators (CCPNR) approved “*Standards of Practice and Competencies for Perioperative Nursing Care, 2010*”.**

2. Knowledge and Application of Perioperative Nursing

- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to apply critical thinking and clinical judgment within the Scope of Practice of a Licensed Practical Nurse in a perioperative role.**
- **Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to practice Licensed Practical Nurse Perioperative Nursing in the operating room:**
 - Role of the LPN in the operating room
 - Application of nursing process
 - Admission and transfer of client
 - Apply principles of asepsis and sterile techniques
 - Demonstrate an understanding of surgical procedures, and understanding of policies and procedures
 - Knowledge of the different disease processes
 - Understanding of the medications used in pre, intra, and immediate post-operative care
 - Anaesthesia medications and protocols
 - Client and health care team safety measures
 - Assist in the teaching / orientation of new staff
 - Ordering of supplies, equipment as appropriate
 - Prepare costing for surgical procedures as appropriate
 - Policies related directly to the surgical suite (i.e. restricted access or dress code)
 - Knowledge of policies and procedure, standards and applicable legislation (i.e. occupational health and safety)
 - Documentation and reporting.

3. Knowledge and Application of Perioperative Scrub Role:

- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to carry out the requirements of the Licensed Practical Nurse in the perioperative Scrub Role:**
 - Apply the principles of asepsis
 - Provide the surgical team with instrumentation and supplies
 - Anticipate the needs of the surgical team
 - Provide safety and security of the client throughout the surgical procedure.
- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform the competencies of the Licensed Practical Nurse in the Scrub Role:**

- Perform surgical scrub procedures
- Perform safety checks
 - Participate in safe surgery check list as per facility policy
 - Confirm/validate internal sterility indicators
- Check case cart / supplies
- Ensure equipment / instrumentation is available, set up, and in good repair
- Prepare efficient sterile set-up
- Drape client for procedure
- Surgical site marking visible when draping is complete
- Knowledge of sequence of events of surgery
- Anticipate needs of surgeon
- Organize and handle sutures, needles, other sharps, and staples
- Manipulate and hand instruments to surgeon and assistants
- Observe for inadvertent breaks in sterile technique and assist with corrective action
- Identify specimens to circulating personnel and type of testing required
- When possible, anticipates unexpected or adverse events and take action
- Handle, label and prepare medications and contrasts for administration to the client
- Participate in handling and counting of instruments and supplies
- Appropriate disposal of hazardous materials
- Appropriate disposal of all sharps
- Ensure appropriate surgical procedure documentation
- Provide skin closure and apply sterile dressing as necessary.

4. Knowledge and Application of Circulating Role

- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to perform as a Licensed Practical Nurse Circulating Role in the preparation of the operating room theatre:**
 - Prepare the room supplies and equipment for a specific operative procedure (includes, but may not be limited to, special equipment, positioning devices, sutures, case cart, warming supplies, IV solutions, physician cards)
 - Notify all other healthcare professionals who may be required for the surgical procedure (i.e. pathologist, technicians)
 - Access x-rays and diagnostic tests as ordered or required.
 - Participate in safe surgery checklist
- **Demonstrate ability to prepare client for the surgical procedure as the LPN circulator:**
 - Identify and assess client
 - Perform the pre-operative checklist
 - Transport client to the operating room theatre
 - Receive client into the operating room theatre and carry out appropriate checks
 - Assist surgeon and anaesthesia provider with positioning client

- safely on the operating room table
 - Reassure client and explain procedures
 - Apply monitor and equipment as required, i.e., ECG, BP, Pulse
 - Oximetry, other anesthetic equipment
 - Apply necessary equipment, i.e., tourniquet, drainage systems
 - Insert urinary catheter and set up drainage as ordered
 - Prepare irrigation solutions as necessary
 - Prepare operative site,
 - Prepare client skin prior to procedure i.e. antiseptic skin prep
 - Provide assistance and support to the scrub nurse with draping and connection to suction, power tools, etc
- **Demonstrate ability to provide assistance during the operative procedure:**
 - Provide, prepare and label medication for administration to the client as ordered
 - Receive and verify specimens by labeling, handling, and documenting appropriately
 - Inspect all sterile items for contamination prior to opening
 - Present open sterile supplies
 - Present sterile supplies to scrub personnel
 - Provide appropriate instruments and supplies as needed
 - Prepare supplies for sterilization- flash sterilization as per facility policy/procedure
 - Document client care, specimens, sponge counts, medications used intraoperatively
 - Document blood loss, fluid output, and intake as required or directed
 - Document any and all unusual incidents with appropriate follow up action as per facility policy
 - Assist with vital signs as appropriate
 - Ensure, along with a second individual, that counts are completed, documented, and acknowledged to the team
 - All counts must be performed with two licensed professionals
 - Monitor sterile technique performed throughout the surgical procedure
 - Provide continuous, astute observation of the surgical team throughout the operative phase while meeting their needs with minimal time delays
 - Assist with monitoring and evaluating the physical well-being of the client to prevent potential impairment or injury
- **Demonstrate ability to provide and assist with procedures and devices required to complete client care following the surgical procedure:**
 - Observe and provide appropriate response to complications and unexpected events during the surgical procedure i.e., cardiac arrest, hypothermia
 - Assist in the physical client transfer and post-operative positioning
 - Affix and observe the dressing post-operatively verifying all drains

- are properly connected and secured as well as appropriate documentation is completed
 - Complete operative record and have scrub personnel review
- **Demonstrate ability to provide support and assistance in providing safety and efficiency for the surgical team and client:**
 - Advocate for client
 - Assist collaboratively with the co-ordination of the surgical schedule procedures i.e., sending for patient, surgeons availability, staffing, providing necessary equipment available
 - Comply with Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) regulations
 - Apply routine/standard, or additional precautions i.e. airborne, droplet and/or contact precautions
 - Carry out appropriate surgical scrub procedures or safety checks, i.e. client identification, allergies, with the circulating nurse
 - Check case cart and supplies for completeness
 - Ensure all equipment and instrumentation is in good repair and available
 - Trouble shoot equipment that malfunctions and seek assistance
 - Facilitates use of accessory surgical equipment, i.e. lasers, electrocautery units
 - Recognizes an emergent situation and send for assistance or supplies as required.
 - Knowledge and understanding of sterile storage requirements i.e temperature and humidity levels
 - Appropriate disposal of hazardous materials
 - Appropriate disposal of sharps

5. Knowledge and Assistance to the Anesthesia Provider

- **Demonstrate critical thinking and clinical judgment related to assisting the anaesthesia provider in each of the following competencies.**
- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to assist anaesthesia provider:**
 - Provides supplies to anaesthesia provider as required
 - Supply anaesthetic cart, i.e. tubing, appropriate size face mask, airway and breathing bag depending on the age and size of the client
 - Provide appropriate endotracheal tubes
 - Assist the anaesthesia provider with the administration of general anesthetic, epidural, spinal, topical, retrobulbular, local anaesthetics, and blocks
 - Initiate intravenous and prepare supplies for anaesthesia provider
 - Provide medication to the anaesthesia provider when requested
 - Assist with induction of anaesthetic:

- Intubation, fixation, and connection of endotracheal tube
- Cricoid pressure if necessary
- Assist with extubation and reversal of anaesthesia
- Provide necessary eye protection, i.e., tape, saline sponge, etc.
- Knowledge of the preparation related to insertion of central venous line (CVP) line, arterial lines, blood warmers
- Check blood and blood products identification with two licensed providers
- Assist with transfer of client to Post Anaesthetic Recovery Room, Intensive Care Units, or receiving unit
- Restock anaesthetic medication as required

6. Knowledge and Application of Pre Operative Phase

- **Demonstrate knowledge and ability to receive and monitor client in pre-operative phase or pre-surgery care as appropriate:**
 - Provide explanations and demonstrate a caring attitude to the client and family
 - Provide information, materials, and support for client and family
 - Check each pre-operative chart for completeness as per facility policy:
 - Accurate identification of client
 - Complete chart
 - History
 - Any prior surgeries
 - Allergy check
 - Hemoglobin, E.C.G., urinalysis, x-ray as ordered
 - Consult if required
 - Consent for the surgical procedure
 - Seek confirmation of the following from the clients or family:
 - Name
 - Doctor
 - Operative site/surgical procedure
 - Surgical site verification and marking (side or laterality) as per facility policy/procedure
 - Nothing per mouth
 - Removal of dentures and partials
 - Identification of prostheses and location
 - Identification of implants, i.e. pacemaker, cochlear implant
 - Removal and or identification, piercings , and knowledge of metal protocols
 - Removal of nail polish and false nails
 - Knowledge of tattoo locations
 - Pre-existing medical conditions and medications
 - Provide the client with warm blankets, pillows, and other comfort measures
 - Attach all necessary monitoring devices, i.e., blood pressure,

oxygen, E.C.G.

- Apply all necessary safety measures- safety straps and remain with the patient
- Provide O2 when required or ordered by doctor
- Check all fluids levels i.e., intravenous (IV) and drainage unit and document
- Attach patient equipment to electrical outlet if battery supply is low
- Assist surgeons and anesthesia provider with physical examinations of client providing necessary equipment and providing privacy for client
- Assist anesthesia provider with topical, retrobulbular, local anesthetic, administration of eye medication, initiation of IV site
- Knowledge of code cart, defibrillator, difficult intubation cart/equipment
- Understanding the LPN role in a code situation – code blue, cardiac arrest as per facility policy

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