

Louisiana State Board of Nursing
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 1998

TO: Kathy Nigro, RN
West Baton Rouge Parish School Nurse
3761 Rosedale Road
Port Allen, LA 70767

FROM: Patricia Ladner, MN, RN *PL*
Nursing Consultant for Practice

RE: Nursing Practice

Pursuant to your request regarding registered nurses delegating glucagon administration to an unlicensed school employee in the case of a known diabetic becoming comatose when hypoglycemic, in accordance with the *Administration of Medication Policy Developed Jointly By The State Board Of Elementary And Secondary Education And The Louisiana State Board Of Nursing, R.S. 17:436.II.B.*:

"Except in life threatening situations, trained unlicensed school employees may not administer injectable medications."

Based on an order from a licensed physician or dentist to train unlicensed school employees to administer glucagon in a life threatening situation, such as coma, and with parental consent, it is within the scope of practice for a school nurse to train unlicensed school employees how to administer glucagon to a known diabetic becoming comatose when hypoglycemic provided that:

- ◆ at least two unlicensed school employees are willing to learn how to administer an injectable medication;
- ◆ the unlicensed school employees have been trained on the technique and can clearly identify the common textbook symptoms of hypoglycemia and other symptoms peculiar to the student as confirmed by the parent;
- ◆ a policy, protocol, is in place that identifies, step-by-step what the trained unlicensed school

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- * employee should do upon finding a known diabetic becoming comatose, such as first requires the trained school employee to rub cake icing, cake gel, or instant glucose on the gums inside the child's mouth.
- ◆ a policy is in place to valid continued competency of preparing and administering the prescribed dose of glucagon.

All policies developed should be based on a physician order and signed by the child's physician and parent prior to initiating the policy.

School nurses and the child's physician are responsible for the quality of health care rendered in the school environment. Based on your assessment of the child's condition and the ability of unlicensed school employees to be trained to administer injectable emergency drugs, recommendations to appropriate personnel within the school system should be made to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the child. This might necessitate the request of an LPN being assigned to a particular school where a known diabetic is likely to become comatose from a hypoglycemic reaction. As delineated in the law, the registered nurse is responsible for determining the level of skills required and the appropriate personnel to administer the medication. Likewise, the school board has an obligation to the students and the registered nurse to make every attempt to employ certified school nurses to meet at least the national recommendations for nurse to student ratio; the ratio must ensure appropriate, safe, health services. Since the law is explicit in its requirement of school boards to provide certified school nurses, the school nurse, when delegating, must consider the degree of registered nurse accessibility to provide for safe supervision and/or emergency care. Based on the child's condition and the school nurse's accessibility, the assignment of an LPN to the school to handle all emergency situations might be advisable.

Teaching unlicensed school employees how to administer injectable medications places them at risk for percutaneous injury from a exposure-prone procedure. Enclosed is a copy of the Board's rules relative to the Prevention of Transmission of Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Reinforcement of Standard Precaution Guidelines and information regarding the vaccine against HBV should be included in the unlicensed school employee's training.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this communication.

cc: file

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