



State of New Jersey

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ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

DATE ISSUED: April 7, 2014

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 14, 2014

**SUBJECT: Administrative Bulletin 4:26
Advanced Practice Nurses with Collaborative Agreements and Joint
Protocols**

The attached Administrative Bulletin is being forwarded for your review, action if necessary, and distribution to staff as appropriate. Please be advised that each recipient of this order is responsible for being familiar with the content and ensuring that all affected personnel adhere to it.



Lynn A. Kovich
Assistant Commissioner

LAK:pjt

DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN 4:26

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SUBJECT: Advanced Practice Nurses with Collaborative Agreements and Joint Protocols

I. PURPOSE

Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) function in a variety of positions in state hospitals in accordance with the needs of the facilities. This Bulletin only applies to APNs who are hired to work collaboratively with physicians with a NJ state mandated Joint Protocol in state psychiatric hospitals. In this role, care may include assessment, ordering and interpretation of diagnostic tests, making diagnoses, and initiation and management of treatment plans, including prescribing medications. This Bulletin establishes a policy for the appointment of such APNs within the state psychiatric hospital system that is consistent with state and regulatory regulations.

II. STATEMENT

APNs currently practice in a wide variety of mental health treatment settings, where they practice independently of physicians and can write prescriptions, have admitting privileges, and bill for third-party reimbursement. In state psychiatric hospitals, APNs do not function as attending physicians. As such, and as per The Joint Commission standards and CMS regulations, they are not permitted to admit, discharge, or conduct history and physicals* in state hospitals. APNs, in a Collaborative Agreement and Joint Protocol with physicians, are credentialed and privileged using the same process as stated in the Medical Staff Bylaws.

Hospitals around the state and nation recognize that when APNs and physicians work together, their collective skills and backgrounds are complimentary and this enhances quality of care and improves cost effectiveness. In order to achieve such benefits, it is the policy of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to have state psychiatric hospitals appoint APNs to work collaboratively with physicians. In particular, DMHAS encourages the hiring of Psychiatric APNs, who practice from a holistic, bio-psychosocial perspective and therefore have knowledge about mental health, physical health, and social needs of patients.

*History and physicals can only be performed by APNs when specified in the Medical Staff Bylaws.

III. AUTHORITY

APNs are licensed by NJ Board of Nursing to practice under the Nurse Practice Act and Nurse Practitioner/Advanced Psychiatric Practice Nurse Act of the State of New Jersey. Authority for APN practice is delineated in the Nurse Practice Act: 45:11-49 et seq. and related board of Nursing Administrative Code: 13:37-6.3 and 13:37-7.1-7.11.

The expansion of APN prescriptive authority to include prescribing CDS without restriction is described in P.L.2004,c.122. and Board of Medical Examiner regulations 13:35-7.6.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Advanced Practice Nurses are registered nurses who have completed master's level education and are certified in an area of specialization to provide clinical care. APNs are Nurse Practitioners and/or Clinical Nurse specialists who specialize in psychiatric/mental health, adult, family, and geriatric care and are certified by a nationally recognized certifying body. APNs are independently certified providers, but they are required to prescribe medications and devices in accordance with a statutorily-mandated joint protocol which has been cooperatively agreed upon and signed by the APN and his/her designated collaborating physician(s)

Collaboration means the ongoing process by which an APN and a physician engage in practice consistent with agreed upon parameters of their respective practices (Nursing Administrative Code: 13:37-8.1).

Collaborating Physician means a licensed staff physician who agrees to work with an APN and to complete an Agreement and a Joint Protocol defining their collaborative relationship and responsibilities. (see attached template)

Credentialing/Privileging is defined for the purpose of this Bulletin as the process of approving the qualifications and granting the authorization that allows APNs to provide care and treatment in a state psychiatric hospital. In accordance with The Joint Commission and CMS Standards, APNs must be credentialed and privileged utilizing the Medical Staff process although they may or may not be members of the Medical Staff.

Joint Protocol means a state mandated written protocol made between an APN and physician(s) that describes specific elements of the APN's prescribing practice, as defined by NJ Admin Code: 13:37-8.1, including the following: circumstances for prescribing, recordkeeping, categories of medication appropriate to the practice, frequency and method of review of patient records, identification of means of direct communication between the APN and

collaborating physician or designee, procedures for the use of medications in emergency situations, and identification of reference materials to be used by the APN and collaborating physician.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. APN Credentialing/Privileging shall occur through the same process as stated in the Medical Staff Bylaws.

1. APNs shall be selected based on work experience which shall include two years previous experience in medication management and treatment of individuals with serious mental illness. The APN and the collaborating physician will meet prior to the offer of a position and discuss parameters and responsibilities of the position in accordance with State regulations.
2. APNs shall submit a completed application to the hospital's Department Chair/Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) for review and recommendation. The application shall include NJ RN license, APN with prescriptive privilege license, NJ CDS certificate, DEA License, and evidence of certification by a nationally recognized certifying body, such as the American Nurses Credentialing Center to the CNO or appropriately qualified designee of the hospital.
3. If acceptable, the Department Chair CNO will submit copies of said documents through the Medical Director to the Medical Executive Committee of the hospital for review. The Medical Executive Committee will review and make a recommendation for credentialing and privileging to the Governing Body regarding the appointment in accordance with Medical Staff Bylaws. The Governing Body will make the final determination regarding granting privileges.
4. APN's can be non-voting members of the Medical Staff and be subject to the bylaws, rules and regulations of the Medical Staff.

B. Agreement and Joint Protocol for APNs and Collaborating Physicians

1. Hospitals shall use the attached templates for the Joint Protocol and Agreement, but these may be modified to suit individual hospital need and an APN's area of specialty practice.
2. In regard to the Joint Protocol, APNs can collaborate with one or more physicians by having a Joint Protocol that specifies each of their responsibilities and the nature of their collaboration.

3. The Protocol is to be signed and dated by the APN and the collaborating physician at the time of employment. In addition, the Protocol must be reviewed, updated, and co-signed at least annually.
4. A copy of the Protocol must be maintained at the practice site, along with copies of all document required for APN licensure and prescriptive authority in New Jersey.

C. Roles and Responsibilities of the APN

1. APNs will report to the CNO, who shall provide administrative supervision. A joint line of supervision will be maintained with the Medical/Clinical Director or Chief of Psychiatry/Medicine if designated by the Medical/Clinical Director for clinical and prescriptive practice.
2. The roles of the APN in State psychiatric hospitals will vary by the needs of the hospitals, but this will include several essential components.
 - a. The APN shall practice with substantial autonomy and independence with a high level of accountability.
 - b. The APN shall be responsible for quality clinical care and for consultation with the physician in difficult cases, or whenever either party deems it necessary.
 - c. The hospital shall develop a policy that describes the specific role and responsibility of the APN.
3. APNs are professionally qualified to assume responsibility for a number of clinical duties in a hospital setting as described in NJ Administrative Code: 45:11-49. APNs have the ability to assess patient functioning and make appropriate judgments and decisions about the need for intervention, referral, or consultation with other clinicians. Additional functions of the APN may include prescribing psychopharmacological agents, various forms of psychotherapy, coordination of community interventions, consultation, clinical supervision, expanded advocacy activities, education and research.
4. State psychiatric hospitals shall assign APNs to collaborate with physicians on a variety of units (e.g., high census/acuity units, discharge units) and can perform bio-psychosocial assessments, provide clinical management, and prescribe medications as needed.

5. APNs shall provide patient-centered, culturally competent, wellness and recovery oriented care that minimizes complications and promotes function and quality of life using treatment modalities such as, psychotherapy and psychopharmacology.
6. The APN will collaborate with the patient and the team to assist the patient in attaining his/her optimal level of functioning. The APN will incorporate health promotion, health protection, and disease prevention into patient care.
7. The APN will focus interventions on preparing patients for discharge from the hospital, and so will coordinate care, anticipate post discharge concerns or potential complications and assist the patient to develop a means to manage these issues.
8. The APN will provide psycho-education to individuals and/or groups of patients, staff, their family and significant others, in order to promote knowledge, understanding and effective management of mental health problems and psychiatric disorders.

4/7/14
DATE:



Lynn A. Kovich
Assistant Commissioner