Performance of Limited Diagnostic Ultrasound by RNs

The South Dakota Board of Nursing is authorized by the state of South Dakota, pursuant to SDCL 36-9-1.1, to safeguard life, health and the public welfare; and to protect citizens from unauthorized, unqualified and improper application of nursing practices.

The practice of registered nurses, pursuant to SDCL 36-9-3 (14.) allows registered nurses to perform other acts that require education and training consistent with professional standards as prescribed by the board, by rules promulgated pursuant to chapter 1-26, and commensurate with the registered nurse's education, demonstrated competence, and experience.

The South Dakota Board of Nursing issues opinions as to what constitutes safe nursing practice. As such, an opinion is not a regulation of the Board and does not have the force and effect of law. An opinion is issued as a guideline to licensees who wish to engage in safe nursing practice, and to facilitate the delivery of safe, effective nursing care to the public.

Purpose

The following guidelines are intended to promote safe care. Registered nurses and institutions are encouraged to also refer to other national standards of practice and evidence based literature to identify additional guidelines or considerations specific to a practice setting or patient population served.

Practice Statement

The South Dakota Board of Nursing affirms that it is within the scope of practice of a registered nurse, pursuant to SDCL 36-9-3 and ARSD 20:48:04, to perform limited diagnostic ultrasound according to the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) clinical competencies and education guidelines.

Guidelines

An appropriately prepared registered nurse may perform a limited diagnostic ultrasound provided the nurse:

1. Completes education and supervised clinical practice under the direct observation of a qualified practitioner/trainer consistent with national guidelines, such as those established by AWHONN;
2. Demonstrates clinical competence under the direct observation of the qualified practitioner/trainer; education and clinical competence should be documented initially and on an ongoing basis;
3. Practices according to accepted standards of practice, such as those established by AWHONN, has a medical order for the procedure, and follows agency policy and credentialing requirements;
4. Has the ability to assess and intervene based upon medical orders or institutional protocols in the event of complications; and
5. Does not make medical diagnoses based on the ultrasound examination.

References

Applicable South Dakota Nursing Laws

1. 36-9-3. Practice of registered nurse