

Scott Walker
Governor

Dennis G. Smith
Secretary



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

DIVISION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

1 WEST WILSON STREET
P O BOX 2969
MADISON WI 53701-2969

Telephone: 608-266-8481
FAX: 608-267-0352
TTY: 888-241-9432
dhs.wisconsin.gov

Date: February 10, 2011

DQA Memo 11-006
Obsoletes BQA-01-021

To: Nurse Aide Training Programs
Nursing Homes

NATP 01
NH 02

From: Shari Busse, Director
Office of Caregiver Quality

Via: Otis Woods, Administrator
Division of Quality Assurance

**Employment Requirements for “Nurse Technicians” and Student Nurses
Working as Nurse Aides**

The purpose of this memo is to provide information regarding the role and responsibilities of “nurse technicians,” and student nurses. This memo:

- Clarifies that “nurse technicians” are nurse aides and must comply with the training and testing requirements for nurse aides who work in health care facilities.
- Explains employment requirements for student nurses who work as nurse aides in health care facilities.
- Clarifies charge nurse and staffing requirements.

“Nurse Technicians”

In 2004, the Department of Regulation and Licensing (DRL) Board of Nursing (Board) issued a revised policy statement describing a certain type of nurse aide as a “nurse technician:”

- A nursing student who either is currently enrolled in a nursing program leading to registered nurse or practical nurse licensure, or has graduated from the program and does not hold a temporary permit, or who has been unsuccessful on the nursing licensure exam and is retaking the exam.

The Board’s policy statement cautions both registered nurses and facilities that a “nurse technician” is not licensed to practice nursing as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse. The policy statement also explains that a “nurse technician” performs delegated nursing or

nursing-related duties under the direct supervision of a registered nurse. See http://drl.wi.gov/board_docview.asp?docid=67&boardid=42&locid=0 for more information.

A person described by the Board as a “nurse technician” is a nurse aide under both Wisconsin and federal law [Wis. Stat. §§ 50.01(2) and 146.40(1)(d), and 42 CFR 483.75(e)]. Accordingly, a “nurse technician” who is employed to perform direct care duties in a health care facility must comply with the training and testing requirements that apply to nurse aides.

Charge Nurse Requirements in Nursing Homes

Wisconsin Statutes § 50.04(2)(b), requires a nursing home charge nurse to be either a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse who acts under the supervision of a registered nurse or a physician. The law does not permit a nurse aide, including a nurse aide who is designated as a “nurse technician” or other title, to be a charge nurse.

Staffing Requirements in Nursing Homes

The hours of nursing personnel cannot be counted as part of a nursing home’s staffing level unless the personnel are registered nurses, licensed practical nurses or nurse aides who are included on the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry. This applies to all nursing homes licensed under Wis. Stat. Chapter 50, and Wis. Admin. Code DHS Chapter 132. The only exception to this requirement is a student nurse who has completed the basic nursing course of an accredited nursing school and works as a nurse aide at a nursing home that is only state licensed and is not federally-certified.

Student Nurses Who Are Employed by Health Care Facilities as Nurse Aides

The following requirements apply to a student nurse who is employed by a health care facility to perform direct care duties. They do not apply to the clinical placement and supervision of a student nurse by an accredited nursing school.

Health care facilities that employ or contract for a student nurse to provide nursing-related, direct care services must ensure that the person satisfies one of the applicable requirements below:

<p>Federally-Certified Nursing Homes, Home Health Agencies or Hospices</p>	<p>The student nurse is already included on the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry as a result of completing an approved nurse aide training and testing program;</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The student nurse has successfully completed a basic nursing course with a minimum of 32 hours of clinical experience through an accredited school for professional or licensed practical nurses, successfully completed an approved nurse aide competency test and is included on the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry.</p>
---	---

ICFs/MR, Hospitals, and state licensed only Home Health Agencies, Hospices & Nursing Homes	<p>The student nurse is already included on the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry as a result of completing an approved nurse aide training and testing program;</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The student nurse has successfully completed a basic nursing course with a minimum of 32 hours of clinical experience through an accredited school for professional or licensed practical nurses. It is not necessary for the student nurse to complete a nurse aide competency exam or be included on the Nurse Aide Registry but the facility must keep the student's transcript on file to verify the requirement has been met.</p>
---	--

Approved Nurse Aide Competency Testing Programs

A list of approved regional test sites can be found at <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/NATD/NrsAidTrgPrgInf.HTM>. A person who has a certificate proving the successful completion of an approved nurse aide competency test meets employment eligibility. A Nurse Aide will be listed on the registry within 24 hours after successful completion of the examination unless the exam must be hand scored. Employers must verify the person's placement on the Registry by going to <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/NATD/NrsAidTrgPrgInf.HTM> and clicking on Search Nurse Aide Registry.

Wisconsin Nurse Aide Training Program Web Site

The Department's web site for Nurse Aide Training and Testing contains the most current versions of relevant documents, such as forms, frequently asked questions, fact sheets, and DQA Memos. See <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/NATD/NATDintro.htm> for more information.

For questions regarding the Nurse Aide Registry contact:

Office of Caregiver Quality
P.O. Box 2569
Madison, WI 53701
Phone: (608) 261-8319
DHSCaregiverIntake@wisconsin.gov