

Consideration of New Policy to Expand the Number of Titles Recognized for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Licensure in 22 *Tex. Admin. Code*, §221.2

Summary of Request: Consider a request to adopt a policy to expand the number of advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) licensure titles beyond those recognized currently in 22 *Texas Administrative Code*, §221.2. The expansion would allow staff to grant licensure titles to nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists educated in the combined specialties of adult health and gerontology to more accurately reflect their education.

Historical Perspective: APRN regulations across the United States have varied significantly over the years with regard to licensure titles, education and certification requirements, and even the process for licensure. Over the years, various attempts have been made to bring some standardization to APRN licensure, education and certification requirements. In 2008, the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (Consensus Model)* was introduced to establish national standards for APRN regulation. It has been endorsed by more than 48 organizations across the United States

- The *Consensus Model* describes the titles that will be used for licensure. It includes licensure in at least one APRN role and population focus.
- The four APRN roles identified in the *Consensus Model* are: nurse anesthetist, nurse-midwife, nurse practitioner, and clinical nurse specialist. The Board recognizes APRNs in all four roles.
- The population foci identified in the *Consensus Model* are:
 - Individual/Across the Lifespan
 - Psychiatric/Mental Health
 - Neonatal
 - Women's Health/Gender-Related
 - Pediatrics
 - Adult/Gerontology

The pediatric and adult/gerontology population foci are further subdivided to differentiate those nurse practitioners who are educated in primary care of those populations from those educated in acute care of those populations.

- Board Rule 221.2(a) (attachment A) lists the APRN licensure titles currently approved by the Board for APRNs in Texas. At this time, the Board licenses adult health or gerontology nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists using separate licensure titles rather than with the combined adult/gerontology title called for in the *Consensus Model*.
- Staff anticipates requesting a rule change to recognize this title in Board Rule at a Board meeting in early 2014 with other revisions to Rule 221. However, programs have already begun educating and graduating nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists who are prepared in the new combined population focus of adult/gerontology.
- Granting a single licensure title as an adult nurse practitioner, acute care adult nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist in adult health nursing does not accurately reflect the educational preparation of the applicant.

- The majority of applicants are not eligible for licensure using two titles. Those applicants who completed these programs who are eligible for and request licensure using both adult and gerontology titles must pay two licensure fees rather than one fee that accurately reflects their education across the full scope of adult health and gerontology.

Staff is requesting that the Board consider adopting a policy (Attachment B) permitting staff to grant APRN licensure to qualified applicants who are eligible for the following titles:

- Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner
- Acute Care Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner
- Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult/Gerontology Nursing

This policy would allow staff to grant appropriate licensure titles to qualified applicants until such time as the amendments to Rule 221 can be considered by the Board.

Pros: Adopting this policy will allow staff to grant licensure titles that more accurately reflect the educational preparation of these three groups of APRNs effective immediately. The adult/gerontology titles will provide a better representation of these APRNs knowledge, skills and competencies to the public, to employers, and other key stakeholders. Recognition of these additional titles will also bring the APRN licensure titles granted in Texas into closer alignment with the *Consensus Model* and will be a step toward greater uniformity with other regulatory entities across the United States.

Cons: None noted.

Staff Recommendation: Move to approve a policy recognizing the following advanced practice registered nurse licensure titles: adult/gerontology nurse practitioner, acute care adult/gerontology nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist in adult/gerontology nursing as provided for in Attachment B. Staff is authorized to grant these titles to qualified APRN applicants.

22 Tex. Admin. Code §221.2, Authorization and Restrictions to Use of Advanced Practice Titles

(a) Effective January 1, 2006, a registered nurse holding him or herself out to be an advanced practice nurse shall be authorized to practice and hold a title in the following categories:

- (1) nurse anesthetist;
- (2) nurse-midwife;
- (3) nurse practitioner in the following specialties:

- (A) Acute Care Adult;
- (B) Acute Care Pediatric;
- (C) Adult;
- (D) Family;
- (E) Gerontological;
- (F) Neonatal;
- (G) Pediatric;
- (H) Psychiatric/Mental Health;
- (I) Women's Health; and/or

- (4) clinical nurse specialist in the following specialties:

- (A) Adult Health/Medical-Surgical Nursing;
- (B) Community Health Nursing;
- (C) Critical Care Nursing;
- (D) Gerontological Nursing;
- (E) Pediatric Nursing; and
- (F) Psychiatric/ Mental Health Nursing.

(b) A registered nurse who holds current authorization to practice as an advanced practice nurse issued by the board in any of the categories indicated in the previous subsection shall use that title when functioning in the advanced practice role. A registered nurse who was granted authorization to practice in an advanced role and specialty not indicated in the previous subsection prior to January 1, 2006, may continue to use the advanced practice title approved by the Board provided all requirements for maintenance of advanced practice authorization are met. "Advanced practice nurse" shall not be used as a title.

(c) Unless authorized as an advanced practice nurse by the board as provided for by §§221.4 - 221.8 of this chapter (relating to Full Authorization, Provisional Authorization; Interim Approval; Petitions for Waiver; and Maintaining Active Authorization as an Advanced Practice Nurse), a registered nurse shall not:

- (1) claim to be an advanced practice nurse or hold himself/herself out to be an advanced practice nurse in this state; and/or

- (2) use a title or any other designation tending to imply that the person is authorized as an advanced practice nurse.

(d) A registered nurse who violates subsection (c) of this section may be subject to an administrative penalty under §301.501 of the Nursing Practice Act.

Policy Recognizing Certain Additional APRN Licensure Titles

The Texas Board of Nursing (Board) recognizes that advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) must be educated to provide a range of health care services to broad patient population focus areas. As a result, education programs have made changes to meet this need. The Board also recognizes that there is a need to grant APRN licensure titles that accurately reflect the licensee's APRN educational preparation.

For many years, the Board has granted licensure titles that include authority to practice in adult health, acute care adult health, or gerontology nursing. The Board recognizes that graduates of certain APRN education programs are now being prepared to provide advanced practice nursing care in a combined adult/gerontology population focus area and that there is a need to recognize this combined population focus area. Therefore, by policy, the Board recognizes the following new APRN licensure titles:

- Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner
- Acute Care Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner
- Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult/Gerontology Nursing