



Interpretive Guideline

Title: Registered nurse filling and unfilling a patient's surgically established gastric banding system.

Guidelines for Registered Nurse Filling and Unfilling a Patient's Gastric Band

The scope of practice for registered nurses may include care provided to bariatric patients through accessing, filling and unfilling the patient's established gastric band system with sterile normal saline in circumstances where:

- The safety and well being of the patient can be ensured;
- There is an established medical regimen;
- There is a medical evaluation;
- There is nursing documentation of a valid order for gastric band filling and unfilling by a licensed health care provider who possesses specific knowledge, skills and abilities in bariatric procedures that are actively incorporated into the health care provider's practice. The valid order may include nurse utilization of palpation or an ultrasound device to locate and access the internal port.
- The necessary health care personnel and equipment to address complications are available at all times;
- Infection control standards are utilized at all times.

(Section 4723.01(B), Ohio Revised Code (ORC)).

The filling and unfilling of a patient's gastric band with sterile normal saline may be within the scope of nursing practice if the following guidelines are observed:

- A. The registered nurse may execute the gastric band fill or unfill regimen that is established by an authorized provider. An authorized provider is an individual who is authorized to practice in this state and is acting within the course of the individual's professional practice.
- B. In executing the nursing regimen, the nurse should communicate changes in patient status to the authorized provider, who is either on site or immediately available through telecommunication, and other appropriate personnel.
- C. A registered nurse should not operate a fluoroscopic device or x-ray emitting device to identify and access the gastric band port, as this involves a function or procedures prohibited by other law or rule (Rule 4723-4-03, (D)(5), Ohio Administrative Code (OAC)).
- D. A registered nurse should not access, fill or unfill the gastric band of a pregnant patient, as this may be harmful or potentially harmful to the patient (Rule 4723-4-03 (E)(1)(d), OAC).

- E. A registered nurse should not access, fill or unfill a patient's gastric band in locations such as private residences, or non-health care facilities that may not meet the requirements of supportive clinical environment and infection control standards.

Considerations in the Registered Nurse's Filling and Unfilling a Gastric Band:

1. The registered nurse providing care to bariatric patients with surgically placed gastric bands should maintain documentation of his/her acquisition of education, demonstration of competency, and any other documents necessary to ensure that practice is in compliance with the standards of safe nursing practice.

2. The registered nurse's education/training and demonstrated competence should include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Gastrointestinal anatomy and physiology;
 - b. Indications, contraindications, potential complications and maintenance considerations related to various surgically placed gastric banding systems.
 - c. Skill in locating and accessing gastric band system ports with required needles/devices;
 - d. Nursing needs specific to bariatric patients;
 - e. Nursing responsibilities, including, but not limited to: observation and monitoring of patient's gastrointestinal functions and other parameters; applicable teaching for patients, family, or significant other specific to the patient and the gastric banding system utilized.

(Rules 4723-4-03 and 4723-4-07 OAC)

Accountability and Responsibility of Nurses

Section 4723.01(B) ORC defines the scope of practice for the registered nurse. Rule 4723-4-03, OAC, holds registered nurses responsible for maintaining and demonstrating current knowledge, skills, abilities, and competence in rendering nursing care within their scope of practice.

The registered nurse must apply the Nurse Practice Act (Chapter 4723, ORC) and rules regulating the practice of nursing (Chapters 4723-1 to 4723-27, OAC) to the specific practice setting. Further, the registered nurse must utilize good professional judgment in determining whether or not to engage in a given patient-care related activity, consistent with the law, rules, and guided by the Board's Decision Making Model. It is critical to note that the law and rules require that the licensee provide nursing care only in circumstances that are consistent with their education, experience, knowledge, and demonstrated competency.

In this statement the Board does not announce a new policy but instead gives licensees specific instructions regarding their obligations under existing law and rules.

Licensees should review the following:

The following should also be reviewed:

- Section 4723.01(B), Ohio Revised Code
- Rule 4723-4-03, Ohio Administrative Code
- Rule 4723-4-06, Ohio Administrative Code
- Rule 4723-4-07, Ohio Administrative Code

A complete copy of the Nurse Practice Act and the rules adopted thereunder is available for review and download from the Board of Nursing website: www.nursing.ohio.gov in the Law and Rules section.

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