

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>County of Sacramento</b>  <b>Department of Health and Human Services</b>  <b>Division of Behavioral Health Services</b>  <b>Policy and Procedure</b></p>	Policy Issuer (Unit/Program)	<b>QM</b>
	Policy Number	<b>QM-03-04</b>
	Effective Date	<b>11-02-2005</b>
	Revision Date	<b>09-01-2016</b>
Title: <b>Nurse Practitioner</b>	Functional Area: <b>Beneficiary Protection</b>	
Approved By: (Signature on File) <b>Signed version available upon request</b>  <b>Alexandra Rechs, LMFT</b> Program Manager, Quality Management  <b>Robert Hales, MD</b> Medical Director, Division of Behavioral Health Services		

**BACKGROUND/CONTEXT:**

The Sacramento County Mental Health Plan (MHP) is responsible for assuring that the mental health services provided are commensurate with the scope of practice, training and experience of the staff utilized. The MHP, through the oversight of Quality Management (QM), must certify all staff that provides mental health services in accordance with California Code of Regulations (CCR), Welfare and Institution Code, and Business and Profession Code regulations.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Nurse Practitioner is a registered nurse who possesses additional preparation and skill in physical diagnosis, psycho-social assessment, and management of health-illness needs in primary health care, and who has been prepared in a program conforming to the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) standards as specified in CCR 1484 (Standards of Education).

Certified Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner is a registered nurse whose advanced preparation is focused on specialization in psychiatry and mental health that conforms to the BRN standards.

Clinical Competence is defined in the CCR Section 1480 as "...to possess and exercise the degree of learning, skill, care and experience ordinarily possessed by a member of the appropriate discipline in clinical practice." The method used to establish initial and continuing evaluation of the NP competence must be specified in the standardized procedure functions.

Standardized Procedures are the legal mechanism for registered nurses, nurse practitioners to perform functions, which would otherwise be considered the practice of medicine. They are developed collaboratively by the nurse practitioner, supervising psychiatrist and administrator in the practice setting. The "standardized procedures" (protocols) define the specific functions a registered nurse, nurse practitioner may perform and under what circumstances.

Furnishing refers to the ordering of a drug or device in accordance with the standardized procedure. A furnishing number is issued by the BRN and required before a NP can order a drug or device specified in the furnishing standardized procedure.

## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish guidelines for the development of standardized procedures and protocols for the Nurse Practitioner (NP) as it relates to the practice of medicine. The guidelines will establish the scope of practice for the delivery of mental health services by the NP, for all County-operated and contracted providers.

## **DETAILS:**

### **Policy**

It is the Policy of the MHP to require that each provider develop written standardized procedures and protocols for the scope of practice for the certified and licensed nurse practitioner (NP).

### **Procedure**

#### **I. Requirements for Nurse Practitioner**

##### **A. Education/Experience**

The Nurse Practitioner (NP) must complete an approved nurse practitioner course, be state certified as a Nurse Practitioner, and maintain a valid license to practice nursing in the State of California. In addition, the NP must demonstrate continued proficiency by taking continued education courses relevant to client needs and identified needs of the Mental Health System of Care.

Through either references or past experience, the NP must demonstrate an ability to fulfill the duties of a certified Nurse Practitioner in a mental health outpatient setting. The NP must possess a current furnishing number.

##### **B. Performance Evaluation**

Annual performance evaluations on all nurse practitioner will be completed by the Medical Director and/or supervising psychiatrist. If the Nurse Practitioner performs other duties during some of his/her scheduled work assignment, other assigned supervisors according to the agencies standard personnel policy shall perform additional performance evaluations.

#### **II. Standardized Procedure Guidelines (Protocols)**

##### **A. Development**

The Board of Registered Nursing in conjunction with the Medical Board of California developed the guidelines for the standardized procedures to be used in organized health care systems. (Title 16 California Code of Regulations)

##### **B. Guidelines**

Standardized procedures shall include a written description of the method used in developing and approving them and any revision thereof. (CCR Title 16)

Each standardized procedure shall include all of the following required elements as specified in Title 16, CCR Section 1474:

1. Be in writing, dated and signed by the agency director, nurse practitioner, and supervising psychiatrist.
2. Specify which standardized procedure functions registered nurses may perform and under what circumstances.
3. State any specific requirements, which are to be followed by registered nurses in performing standardized procedure functions.
4. Specify any experience, training, and/or education requirements for performance of standardized procedure functions.
5. Establish a method for initial and continuing evaluation of the competence of those registered nurses authorized to perform standardized procedure functions.

6. Provide for a method of maintaining a written record of those persons authorized to perform standardized procedure functions.
7. Specify the scope of supervision required for performance of standardized procedure functions.
8. Set forth any specialized circumstances under which the registered nurse is to immediately communicate with a patient's psychiatrist concerning the patient's condition.
9. State the limitations on settings, if any, in which standardized procedure functions may be performed.
10. Specify patient record keeping requirements.
11. Provide for a method of periodic review of the standardized procedures.

C. Furnishing Standardized Procedure (Protocol)

The furnishing nurse practitioner must identify a drug formulary in conjunction with the supervising psychiatrist to include the following in the standardized procedure:

1. The specific drug name, dosage, clinical indications and complications/adverse reactions.
2. The diagnosis of illness or condition for which a Schedule II-V controlled substance is to be furnished.
3. The supervising psychiatrist may supervise not more than four furnishing nurse practitioners at a time.
4. The NP is required to possess a DEA registration if furnishing for Schedule II-V.
5. Review and approve annually the Standardized Procedure for Furnishing drugs and devices by the certified nurse practitioner.

III. County Mental Health Plan Standards

A. NP Staff Registration/Privileges

The NP will be afforded all the rights and privileges of a Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA).

1. The NP will submit a Staff Registration Application Form per protocol with a copy of the following:
  - A. RN license
  - B. DEA license, if applicable
  - C. Furnishing Number
2. The NP will submit a copy of the signed Standardized Procedures, developed in collaboration with the supervising physician and agency administrator, detailing the NP scope of practice.

B. Nurse Practitioner – without Psychiatric specialization

1. All new clients will be seen for the initial medication evaluation and diagnosis by a psychiatrist
2. NPs may complete the Annual Medication Service Plan (AMSP) with the co-signature of the supervising psychiatrist and provide follow-up medication support visits.
3. The psychiatrist will document, in the medical record, the level of consultation with the NP for a new client.
4. May sign for the request and receipt of drug samples in accordance with Quality Management P & P 07-03, Dispensing "Sample" Medications.
5. NPs are strongly encouraged to avail themselves of educational opportunities that may enhance job related skills and knowledge.

C. Nurse Practitioner Psychiatric Specialist (Preferred)

1. The NP with a certified specialization in Psychiatry may provide the initial medication evaluation and diagnosis provided the NP consults with the Psychiatrist at the time of the evaluation (Adult Programs Only).
2. The Psychiatrist will document, in the medical record, the level of consultation with the NP for a new client.
3. The NP may complete the Annual Medication Service Plan (AMSP) with the co-signature of the supervising psychiatrist.

4. May sign for the request and receipt of drug samples in accordance with Quality Management P & P 07-03, Dispensing "Sample" Medications.
- D. Supervising Psychiatrist Responsibilities
1. May not supervise more than four (4) NPs at one time.
  2. Develop and evaluate annually, in collaboration with the agency administrator and the NP, the Standardized Procedures.
  3. Establish an initial and ongoing mechanism to monitor the NP competence to manage clients.
  4. Be available for consult, at all times during working hours, by at least the telephone.
  5. Ensure that the NP clients are seen by a psychiatrist, for a face to face contact, at least annually.
  6. Ensure that time sensitive psychiatric paperwork (i.e., JV-220 forms, SSI/SDI forms, etc.) are completed and submitted in a timeframe consistent with established guidelines.
- E. Additional Requirements
- a. An NP must be supervised by a psychiatrist employed by the same Contracted Provider or County Operated Program.
  - b. The Contracted Provider or County Operated Program must have at least two (2) psychiatrists on staff.
  - c. The Contracted Provider or County Operated Program must have a designated Medical Director.
  - d. The initial medication evaluation and diagnosis must be completed by a staff psychiatrist. Follow up appointments may be with the NP.

**REFERENCE(S)/ATTACHMENTS:**

- California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 1474
- Business and Professions Code Section 2725-2742, 2834-2837
- Health and Safety Code, Section 1250, 11055, 11056
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21, Section 1306.02

**RELATED POLICIES:**

- Staff Registration
- Dispensing "Sample" Medications

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Enter X	DL Name	Enter X	DL Name
X	Mental Health Staff		
X	Mental Health Treatment Center		
X	Adult Contract Providers		
X	Children's Contract Providers		
X	Alcohol and Drug Services		
	Specific grant/specialty resource		

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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