NON-NURSE CAREGIVERS IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

The Missouri State Board of Nursing believes emergency nursing is a specialty area of nursing that involves substantial specialized education, judgement, and skill based on knowledge and application of principles derived from the biological, physical, social and nursing sciences, including, but not limited to:

1. Assessment, nursing diagnosis, nursing care, and counsel of persons who are ill, injured or experiencing alterations in normal health processes.

2. The administration of medications and treatment as prescribed by a person licensed in this state to prescribe such medications and treatments.

3. Responsibility for the teaching of health care and the prevention of illness to the patient and his family.

4. The coordination and assistance in the delivery of a plan of health care with all members of the health team.

5. The teaching and supervision of other persons in the performance of any of the foregoing.

Emergency services shall be under the medical direction of a qualified staff physician with the delivery of comprehensive nursing care for emergency department consumers being the responsibility of the registered nurse.

Registered nurses must participate in a collaborative process with all members of the emergency health care team in defining the roles and responsibilities of the non-nurse caregiver in the emergency department.

Non-nurse caregivers, including but not limited to Emergency Medical Technicians/Paramedics in emergency departments must practice within the parameters of a clearly defined position description that does not exceed legal boundaries of practice in the state of Missouri and that clearly delineates appropriate lines of responsibility and accountability as evidenced on the emergency department organizational chart.

Non-nursing caregivers providing nursing care cannot be utilized to replace the registered nurse in the coordination and continuity of health care. The non-nurse caregivers in the emergency department must be directly supervised by a registered nurse twenty-four (24) hours a day to assure comprehensive care.

The emergency room registered nurse and the non-nursing caregiver, including but not limited to paramedics and EMTs, must work in a collaborative manner to maximize and evaluate patient care. All caregivers must work jointly in the care of consumers. The standards of care in the emergency department must be consistent with the standards of care in the department of nursing.

References:

1. Missouri Nursing Practice Act
2. Department of Health, 19 CSR 30-20 (E) Nursing Services
3. Emergency Nurses Association Position Statement, The Use of Non-registered Nurses (Non-RN) Caregivers in Emergency Departments
4. Missouri Nurses Association Position Statement on use of Non-Registered (Non-RN) Caregiver in Emergency Departments
5. Guidelines for the Use of Paramedics and EMTs in the Emergency Department; Paramedics-Supervision

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