

# ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL NURSES OF CONNECTICUT

## POSITION PAPER

### THE USE OF LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

#### Position

It is the position of the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut that the role of Licensed Practical Nurses in the school setting must reflect their scope of practice.

The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut agrees that there is a place for the licensed practical nurse (LPN) in the school setting. The LPN cannot however, take on the role of the school nurse or function independently of the school nurse<sup>1</sup> or registered nurse (RN). According to the Connecticut Nurse Practice Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 20-87a(c):

The practice of nursing by a licensed practical nurse is defined as the performing of selected tasks and sharing of responsibility under the direction of a registered nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse...

The scope of practice of LPNs is based on their education (10-12 months after high school, usually in vocational-technical programs) and their license (which requires them to work under the direction of the RN).

The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut believes that the appropriate role for the LPN in the school setting is as an assistant to the school nurse, not as a replacement for the school nurse. For example:

- as the second nurse in a building;
- working in the classroom with one or more students with special health care needs;
- assisting the school nurse in doing assessments;
- performing initial vision or hearing screenings;
- documentation of physical examinations and screenings on cumulative health records throughout a district.

Based on the Connecticut Board of Examiners for Nursing 1989 declaratory ruling, the school nurse must be responsible for all decision making regarding the nursing care provided in the school and which activities may be delegated to the LPN. The school nurse must provide written protocols for the LPN to follow for everyday situations which would arise (e.g., head injury, abdominal pain, musculo-skeletal injuries, etc.) in addition to the written care plans for students with special health care needs. The school nurse must receive and review all medication orders and write a medication administration plan for the LPN to follow. The school nurse must be available to provide direction in all situations requiring RN assessment and intervention.

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<sup>1</sup> School Nurse is defined as a registered nurse with additional qualifications required by Connecticut General Statutes [C.G.S.] Section 10-212 and Connecticut administrative regulations Section 10-212-2 and 10-212-5.  
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