

Nursing Scope of Practice

Registered Nurse

The scope of practice for professional registered nurses (RNs) at Northwest Kidney Centers, NKC provides guidance for the planning and delivery of professional nursing care, is based on specialized knowledge and application of the principles of biological, physical, and social science as acquired by a completed course of study in an approved school of professional nursing. The professional RNs scope of practice does not include acts of medical diagnosis or the prescription of therapeutic or corrective measures. The registered nurse practices interdependently under the direction of the NKC Medical Director, the credentialed and approved attending physician or other authorized health care practitioner.

The professional registered nurse employed at NKC is defined as an individual who has graduated from an approved school of nursing with an Associate, Bachelor, or Master level degree in nursing, has successfully passed the National Counsel Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and holds an active unrestricted Washington state or Nurse Licensure Compact/Enhanced Licensure Compact (NLC/eNLC) license.

The clinical practice of the Registered Nurse (RN) employed by Northwest Kidney Centers, focuses on providing safe, effective care using a whole-person approach.

1. Assessment and Evaluation:

- Conduct comprehensive assessments of patients' health status, including physical, psychological, and social aspects according to State and Federal guidelines upon admission, annually and or as needed to address patient needs or changes in condition.
- Performs and documents ancillary assessments including but not limited to Fall Risk, Diabetes, Access Monitoring, etc.
- Documents pre and post dialysis treatment assessments accurately and promptly for all patients.
- Consult and collaborate with Social Worker for Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) assessment and available resources as needed.

2. Dialysis Treatment Planning and Implementation:

- Collaborate with patient's Nephrologist to evaluate effectiveness of dialysis treatment based on medical history, laboratory results, and other relevant factors
- Administer dialysis therapy as prescribed, ensuring adherence to prescribed protocols, and monitor patients' response to treatment.
- Performs or helps in dialysis machine set up, safety verifications,
 - Provides clinical oversight of unlicensed dialysis technicians (DT) and licensed practical nurses (LPN) performing pre, post and intra-dialytic treatment to patients.

3. Medication Administration and Management:

- Administer prescribed medications, including intravenous medications, as part of the dialysis treatment.
- Monitor and document patients' response to medications, observe for side effects, and provide necessary interventions.

- Complete medication review and verify patient medication history, ensuring medications and dosages taken by the patient are accurately reflected in the EMR
- Educate patients on medication management and potential drug interactions. Consult with patients' Nephrologist, Pharmacist, or other healthcare provider, as necessary.

4. Patient Education and Counseling:

- Provide comprehensive education to patients and their families about dialysis treatment, self-care techniques, and lifestyle modifications.
- Promote self-management and empower patients to actively take part in their dialysis treatment.
- Offer emotional support to patients and their families, addressing psychosocial concerns related to dialysis treatment.

5. Care Coordination and Collaboration:

- Collaborate with the interdisciplinary healthcare team to complete patient plan of care to ensure the continuity and coordination of patient care.
- Communicate effectively with physicians, nephrologists, and other healthcare professionals to discuss patients' progress and plan of care.
- Take part in multidisciplinary meetings and contribute to developing comprehensive care plans for patients.

6. Documentation and Record-Keeping:

- Keep accurate and up-to-date patient records, documenting assessments, interventions, and outcomes.
- Adhere to legal and ethical standards of confidentiality in documenting patient information.
- Complete reports for monthly QAPI meetings, NHSN HAI reporting and required CMS forms promptly and accurately.

7. Delegation and Supervision

The registered nurse may delegate selected nursing functions to others in accordance with their education, credentials, and demonstrated competence as defined in WAC 246-9840-010. The registered nurse is accountable for the supervision of clinical practice to whom delegated nursing functions have been assigned to include evaluation outcomes and care provided by licensed and certified paraprofessional staff (i.e. LPN, CHT, CCHT).

It is important to note that this scope of practice is a general guideline and may vary based on specific NKC clinical practice policies and procedures. NKC nurses will keep and enhance their professional competency through continuing education programs, industry conference attendance, involvement with NKC sponsored learning activities and other external educational opportunities (i.e., workshops, certifications, advanced degree, etc.) along with membership with any nursing organizations.

Licensed Practical Nurse

The Licensed Practical Nurse, LPN, is authorized to provide selected aspects of nursing services under the direction and supervision of a registered nurse, nurse practitioner or other licensed healthcare provider.

The Licensed Practical Nurse employed at Northwest Kidney Centers is an individual who has graduated from an approved school of nursing with an Associate level degree or Diploma in nursing from an approved nursing education

program and, has successfully passed the National Counsel Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and holds an active, unrestricted Washington state or Nurse Licensure Compact/Enhanced Licensure Compact (NLC/eNLC) license.

The nursing duties of the LPN employed at NKC include but may not be limited to the following nursing activities in accordance with WAC 246-840-700 of the WA Nursing Practice Act:

1. Basic nursing care tasks, such as monitoring and observation patients during treatment, taking vital signs, administering medications, initiating/terminating dialysis treatments.
2. Collaborating with healthcare team to develop and implement patient care plans and goals under the direction of the registered nurse or other advanced practice clinical professional.
3. Provide education and support to patients and their families on health-related issues, dialysis treatment, and self-care practices.
4. Documentation of patient information, nursing interventions, and outcomes accurately and timely in compliance with state and federal regulatory standards.
5. The LPN makes basic observations, collects data and assists in identification of needs and problems, communicating findings to supervising clinical provider.
6. Assist in the development of patient care plan utilizing a standardized care plan and nursing process in collaboration with the supervising registered nurse.
7. Collect, review and verify patient medication history, ensuring medications and dosages taken by the patient are accurately reflected in the EMR.

Delegation and Supervision

In accordance with WAC 246-840-010, the LPN employed by NKC may delegate limited nursing tasks to competent individuals in selected situations in accordance with their education, credentials and level of competence. The LPN is required to supervise individuals to whom functions have been delegated and reports outcomes of delegated nursing care tasks to the RN or supervising health care provider.

Dialysis Technician Scope of Practice

Nursing Technician

Northwest Kidney Centers, NKC, may employ nursing technicians who have completed at least one academic term of a nursing commission-approved program satisfactorily in accordance with RCW 18.79.360(4)(e), WAC 246-840-860 and WAC 246-840-890. The completed term must include a clinical component for consideration of employment. NKC verifies the enrollment and good standing of nursing technicians in an approved nursing program upon hire.

1. Continued Qualification Verification: NKC verifies that nursing technicians continue to qualify and remain in good standing within three weeks of completing each academic term (semester or quarter) as outlined in WAC 246-840-890.
2. Documentation of Authorized Functions: NKC obtains and maintains written documentation from the approved nursing program specifying the nursing functions that the nursing technician is authorized to perform. In addition to the written documentation the function of the nursing technician is limited by the following guidelines: (1) May function only under the direct supervision of a registered nurse who has agreed to act as supervisor and is immediately available. (2) May gather information about patients and administer care to patients. (3) May not assume ongoing responsibility for assessments, planning, implementation, or evaluation of the care of patients. The nursing technician may participate in all aspects of the nursing care process under the guidance of the registered nurse and within the scope of the nursing

technician's education. (4) May never function independently, act as a supervisor, or delegate tasks to licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, or unlicensed personnel. (5) May not administer chemotherapy, blood or blood products, intravenous medications, scheduled drugs, nor carry out procedures on central lines. (6) May not perform any task or function that does not appear on the verification sent to the nursing technician's employer by the nursing program in which the nursing technician is enrolled.

3. Supervision and Limitations: A registered nurse must provide direct supervision to nursing technicians. Nursing duties cannot be delegated to nursing technicians for independent assignments or tasks/functions that are not specified by the nursing program. Documentation from the nursing program specifying the nursing functions of the nursing technician will be shared with the supervising registered nurse on every shift the nursing technician is scheduled to work.

4. Employment Policies and Procedures: NKC follows its own guidelines, policies, principles, and procedures related to nursing technicians. NKC will verify the nursing technician's enrollment in an approved nursing program in accordance with WAC 246-840-890. NKC identifies nursing technicians as "nursing technicians". At any time, the nursing technician does not meet the enrollment criteria, employment will be suspended. If there are any practice-related actions taken against the nursing technician, NKC will notify the Washington State Board of Nursing at P.O. Box 47864, Olympia, WA 98504-7864.

By adhering to these regulations and guidelines, NKC ensures that nursing technicians operate within their scope of practice, receive appropriate supervision, and maintain compliance with educational requirements and standards.

Dialysis Technician

The dialysis technician, DT, is responsible for providing direct patient care and support in the dialysis setting under the supervision of the registered nurse or other appropriate licensed healthcare professional. The DT scope of clinical practice for NKC includes the following in accordance with the Washington state regulation C246-827-0520WA:

1. Setting up and preparing dialysis equipment for patient treatments
2. Monitoring patients during dialysis sessions and reporting any abnormalities to the registered nurse or onsite clinical leader.
3. Administration of medications and treatments as prescribed by the Advanced Practice Practitioner or Physician according to the allowable medications and treatments per WA state regulations.
4. Daily and weekly machine disinfection as recommended by the manufacturer.
5. Ensure the safety and comfort of patients throughout the dialysis process, addressing concerns or complaints and notifying clinical leadership as appropriate for assistance.
6. Documenting patient information, treatment data, and observations accurately and in a timely manner.
7. Providing patient education on dialysis options including transplantation approved NKC educational assets.

The dialysis technician plays a vital role in the delivery of care to NKC patients and contributes to the overall well-being of the patient and the patient's support system. In compliance with the WA State Medical Assistant Certification program, the dialysis technician must apply for their state certification within 30 days of orientation and training completion to provide independent hands-on clinical care for patients at NKC. Furthermore, the dialysis technician is mandated by federal law to obtain a national certification (CHT, CCHT, etc.) within 18 months of completion of orientation. Dialysis technicians employed by Northwest Kidney Centers are required to apply and sit for a national certification within the first 12 months of employment.