

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

	Explanatory statement about Advisory Opinions		An advisory opinion adopted by the Alaska Board of Nursing is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion the Alaska Board of Nursing regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the health and safety of the Alaska healthcare consumer. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training and supervision to assure safety of their patient.
Date	Topic	Interested Party	Decision
June-90	A registered nurse may administer analgesics through established epidural catheters.	Letter to Providence Hospital from executive secretary referencing the Board's June 1987 action.	The registered nurse must have appropriate educational preparation for this function, and the institution has a responsibility to see that each nurse is adequately prepared. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009
September-91	Suturing		Registered nurse scope of practice does not include suturing. Statement from annual report. No background information. AFFIRMED JUNE 1995

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

January-92	A registered nurse may practice as a first assistant to a surgeon.	Letter to Ketchikan General Hospital explaining Board's position in February 1988.	The practice must be done in accordance with the Board's position statement "Registered Nurse and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Scopes of Practice" and the "AORN Official Statement on RN First Assistants." The surgeon must directly supervise the nurse. A nurse may not practice under standing orders or protocols that require the nurse to make medical judgments outside the nurse's scope of practice. ADVISORY OPINION UPDATED AUGUST 1993.
September-92	Dispensing medications	Board reviews letter from South Peninsula Hospital regarding dispensing prepackaged medications in the emergency room.	A registered nurse may not dispense medications unless the nurse is dispensing in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Pharmacy. REITERATED IN MARCH 1995. SEE PRE-PACKAGED MEDICATIONS JUNE 1999 AND SEPTEMBER 2002.
August-93	Registered Nurse First Assist		Approved the Association of Operating Room Nurses statement on RN as First Assistant as guidance to nurses on this issue.
April-04	Forensic Registered Nurse role		Is within SOP of Registered Nurse. SEE JUNE 2001.
December-94	Clinical Support Associate		The Board determined that when the CSA is a licensed nurse working as a Clinical Support Associate, they are held accountable to his/her highest level of licensure. And, if the licensed nurse has practice problems, his/her registered nurse license will be sanctioned even though the license nurse is working as a CSA.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

March-95	Sharps debridement by Certified enterStomal Therapy Nurse	Maureen Rutman, Registered Nurse and Donna Zoznock, Registered Nurse	The board determined that it is an acceptable practice for the Certified EnterStomal Terapy Nurse to do sharps debridement with a physician's order, following national standards and with clear policies and procedures in place. AMENDED October 2009.
March-95	Dispensing medications	letter to Alaska Native Medical Center	Dispensing medications is not within the scope of practice of a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse in Alaska SEE ALSO PRE-PACKAGED MEDICATIONS JUNE 1999 AND SEPTEMBER 2002.
June-95	emergency drugs	response to request from hospice	A Registered Nurse may carry emergency drugs that are properly labeled and administered with a doctor's order.
June-95	Suturing	Providence Medical Center	A Registered Nurse may not suture independently or with the assistance of a physician.
June-96	stabilizing peripherally inserted central catheter lines	Valley Hospital	Stabilizing the peripherally inserted central catheter lines through the use of a nylon suture is within a registered nurse's scope of practice. Specialized training is required in accordance with the position statement, "Registered Nurse and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Scopes of Practice."
October-96	ventilators	Brenda Sturn	A nurse may not initiate or set up ventilators.
October-96	Biofeedback therapy		Biofeedback therapy is an expanded scope of practice with specialized training. Expanded scope of practice is defined in the position statement "Registered Nurse and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Scopes of Practice."

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

March-97	therapeutic phlebotomy		A nurse may perform therapeutic phlebotomy if there are policies and procedures and proof of specialized training and certification.
September-97	diabetic foot care	Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation	Diabetic foot care has restrictions and the board recommends special training. A specialist should be consulted for diabetics and clients with compromised circulation. SEE SEPTEMBER 2007.
March-98	conscious sedation		Administering conscious sedation is within the scope of practice of a registered nurse. Reaffirming earlier position in response to a request for a board opinion on use of a specific drug for conscious sedation. Appropriate training and certification required. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.
June-99	delivery of prepackaged medications	Central Peninsula General Hospital	Delivery of prepackaged medications is within the scope of practice of a registered nurse when a physician orders the medications. Decision based on the procedure presented by Central Peninsula General Hospital. SEE SEPTEMBER 2002.
September-99	hair grafts	query from MD	Performing the procedure of multiple apparatus for forming multiple cavities for placement of hair grafts is not within a registered nurse's scope of practice.
March-00	performing gastric pH and motility studies		Performing gastric PH and motility studies is within a registered nurse's expanded role.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

June-00	Forensic Registered Nurse role		The Board determined that there had been a 1994 Board decision and a letter written that stated the forensic nurses' work was within the scope of practice. SEE JUNE 2001.
June-01	intubation	Alaska Native Medical Center	A registered nurse may not intubate on a regular basis. New scopes of responsibilities may be defined by formalized courses of study. SEE MARCH 2007 LARYNGEAL MASK AIRWAY.
June-01	Forensic Registered Nurse role		Forensic nursing is within a nurse's scope of practice; Reaffirm April 1994 decision.
July-01	Administering Propofol	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	Administering the drug Propofol is outside the scope of practice of a nurse when being used for anesthesia. Unless the nurse has formalized, documented training with didactic and supervised clinical experience in the administration of general anesthesia. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.
December-01	flexible sigmoidoscopy	Alaska Native Medical Center, SouthCentral Foundation	Training program approved to prepare registered nurse to perform flexible sigmoidoscopy. Program meets guidelines for a registered nurse to acquire new responsibilities for advanced and specialty practices. SEE JUNE 2007.
June-02	Administering Fentanyl	Sandy Tackett, Registered Nurse, DON, Petersburg Medical Center	It is in the scope of practice for a registered nurse to administer I.V. conscious sedation using Fentanyl under direct supervision by a physician. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

June-02	Administering Ketamine	Christine Blackgoat, Registered Nurse, JD, Central Peninsula General Hospital	Board does not support use of Ketamine by Conscious Sedation Nurses. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.
September-02	repackaging dispensed medication		Reaffirmed June 99 position: repackaging dispensed medication is administration, within the scope of traditional nursing practice. Overturns decision Dec. 01 that pre-filling medisets was dispensing and outside the scope for Licensed Practical Nurse.
September-02	non-FDA approved dietary supplements	Alaska Pioneer Home	Board reaffirms June 1997 position and does not support nurse administration of dietary supplements. SEE SEPTEMBER 2006 AND APRIL 2008.
March-03	Administering Propofol	John Walker, MD	Board upholds July 2001 position that Registered Nurse administration of Propofol is outside the scope of practice. SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.
September-03	advancing colonoscopy scope	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	Advancing colonoscopy scope by Registered Nurse with direct MD supervision; approve the endoscope training course proposed for Fairbanks Memorial Hospital excluding the grandfather clause and with Debra Allen, RNC to go through the process and be checked off before serving as an instructor.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

March-04	PICC line insertion by Registered Nurse	Providence Medical Center	Approve the education program at Providence Alaska Medical Center which would train Registered Nurses to allow them to insert peripherally inserted central catheters using micro introducers and ultrasound guidance. SEE DECEMBER 2007.
September-04	Facility programs for Registered Nurse expanded roles		Board accepts the checklist for facilities to utilize when submitting proposed programs for expanded roles for RNs programs. SEE APRIL 2009.
December-04	UAP phone orders to RNs from physician offices	Providence Medical Center	Board wrote a letter clarifying that phone orders are to be accepted only from other licensed medical personnel.
June-05	distribution of donated medications		Registered Nurse distribution of expired or donated prescription medication samples represents “dispensing” and is outside the scope of practice for Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses in Alaska. Memo to Board of Pharmacy, Board of Medicine, Board of Nursing Newsletter and other professional publications such as ANA Newsletter regarding RNs accepting and dispensing medication, including controlled substances.
September-05	Moderate IV Sedation	Providence Medical Center	The Board upheld the previous position regarding Moderate Sedation (Ketamine and Propofol are not approved, Fentanyl is acceptable for administration). SEE ADVISORY OPINION, JUNE 2006, NURSE ADMINISTRATION OF SEDATING AND ANESTHETIC AGENTS. UPDATED October 2009.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

September-05	Registered Nurse scope of practice		readopts Appendix C, Position Statement, Registered Nurse and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Scopes of Practice, with changes.
March-06	non-FDA approved dietary supplements	Representative Kelly	Board reiterates previous positions that held this to be outside the scope of practice for an Registered Nurse. SEE SEPTEMBER 2006 AND APRIL 2008.
June-06	administration of sedating and anesthetic agents	Providence Medical Center	It is within the SOP for an Registered Nurse, other than a CRNA, to administer sedating agents under defined conditions. UPDATED October 2009.
September-06	non-FDA approved dietary supplements	Representative Kelly, Rick Schikora	Board approves dietary supplements but continues to find administration of herbs outside the scope of practice for Registered Nurse. Placed in regulation. SEE APRIL 2008.
December-06	PEG/PEJ tube insertion	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	It is within scope of practice for Registered Nurse to assist with PEG/PEJ insertion, after completion of facility training program
December-06	administration of deep sedation	Providence Medical Center	Board reiterates the limitations identified in the Advisory Opinion September 2006 and readopts Advisory Opinion with updated references. UPDATED October 2009.
March-07	Registered Nurse Refresher Courses must be approved by the Board of Nursing prior to enrollment, per AS 08.68.251(b)(1) and 12 AAC 44.600-660.	Tamara Williams	RN Refresher course from Parkland College, online, not approved by the Board, per AS 08.68.251(b)(1) and 12 AAC 44.600-660. No exception would be made for Tamara Williams to accepting a non-Board approved course.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

March-07	Administration of Sedating and Anesthetic Agents	Christine Anderson, RN, Director of Patient Care Services, South Peninsula Hospital	RESOLVED that the Board adopts a change in II. D. UPDATED October 2009.
March-07	Laryngeal Mask Airway	Chris Glaspell, RN at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	She asked whether trained Registered Nurses are within their scope of practice to insert laryngeal mask airways. The Board concluded that this is within the scope of practice of a trained RN.
June-07	External Jugular Vein IV Catheter Insertion	Dr. Kevin DeDuca, MatSu Regional Hospital	This is a peripheral IV site and within the scope of practice for Registered Nurse insertion with the proper training.
June-07	Flexible Sigmoidoscopy performed by Registered Nurse	SouthCentral Foundation	grants approval of the request by South Central Foundation to expand the Flexible Sigmoidoscopy screening program performed by RNs to the primary care clinic in Wasilla and the community health care centers in McGrath and Nilavena.
September-07	Diabetic foot and nail care	Lisa Garneau, RN, Kathleen Eischen RN	The Board notes that an advisory opinion issued in September 1997 recognized diabetic foot care as within the scope of practice of a Registered Nurse with specialized training.
September-07	Registered Nurse administered anesthesia		Board amends and readopts the Advisory Opinion. AMENDED October 2009.
September-07	conservative sharp debridement	Rachelle White, RN, YKHC, certified Ostomy and Wound Care nurse	The Board notes that an advisory opinion issued in March 1995 recognized that sharp wound debridement is within the scope of practice for a Registered Nurse with certification in ostomy care.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

December-07	PICC line tip placement	Alaska Native Medical Center	Education program for assessment of chest radiographs for PICC line tip placement, with subsequent clearance of the catheter for use, by Registered Nurses.
December-07	scope of practice decision tree		the Board adopted the Arizona scope of practice decision making tree for use in making judgments.
December-07	delegation decision tree		the Board adopted the Ohio and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing delegation decision trees to aide RNs in making judgements.
December-07	school nurse delegation	Alaska School Nurse Association	Can the school principal delegate if the parent is not available? The Board stated that the school nurse must follow state law regulating their nursing license, over school policy.
April-08	school nurse training of UAP vs. delegation	Alaska School Nurse Association	The Board refers to the definition of delegation which requires delegation must be to a single person related to a specific patient, with a recommendation that there be written documentation of the delegation. The Board recommends that instruction/training be documented in writing.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

April-08	what is supervision?	Alaska School Nurse Association	National Council of State Boards of Nursing defines supervision as the provision of guidance or direction, oversight, evaluation and follow-up by the licensed nurse for the accomplishment of a nursing task delegated to nursing assistive personnel. This definition goes on to define Direct Supervision as involving the presence of the licensed nurse who is working with other nurses and/or nursing assistive personnel to observe and direct the assistant's activities. The proximity of this supervision is such that immediate intervention is possible if problems occur. Indirect Supervision occurs when the licensed nurse is not present and supervision is provided by other than direct observation of the nurses and/or nursing assistive personnel. The absence of proximity of the licensed nurse requires processes being in place for the direction, guidance, support and monitoring of the Licensed Practical Nurse or nursing assistive personnel activities.
April-08	Are Cranberry capsules considered a food supplement or an herb, for the purposes of 12 AAC 44.945	Providence Medical Center	The board reiterated its interpretation of cranberry extract as food supplement. Products labeled as such fall within the approved substances referenced in 12 AAC 44.945.
April-09	Facility programs for Registered Nurse expanded roles		Board adds "Nursing Policies" to the checklist

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

July-09	Can a Registered Nurse administer Ketamine for pain management, rather than anesthesia?		After reviewing the Anesthesia Advisory Opinion Forum notes from the May 18, 2009 meeting and discussion regarding the AK Board of Nursing Advisory Opinion on Nurse Administration of Sedating and Anesthetic Agents. it was decided to adhere to the decision that RN's WILL NOT be allowed to administer ketamine for pain management and anxiolysis management. A registered nurse in the State of Alaska MAY NOT administer deep sedation. SEE October 2009 update.
July-09	Can a Registered Nurse in the State of Alaska administer deep sedation?		The Board reiterated that they could not.
July-09	What is the role of the RN in administration of analgesia/anesthesia by catheter technique (epidural, intrathecal, spinal, PCEA) for pregnant women?		The Board stated that an RN may monitor the patient but not manipulate or titrate the dosage of analgesia/anesthesia by catheter technique (epidural, intrathecal, spinal, PCEA) for pregnant women.
July-09	Ear Lavage		The Board affirms that a facility should have a policy and procedure that is within the scope of practice for an RN or Licensed Practical Nurse. It is outside the scope of duties of a Certified Nurse Aide.
July-09	Stool Impaction removal		The Board affirms that this is within the scope of duty for an RN and Licensed Practical Nurse but outside the duty of a Certified Nurse Aide.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

July-09	Intraosseous Access	Fairbanks Memorial Hospital	Intraosseous access is taught in PALS and ACLS. Thus it is appropriate for a properly educated RN to perform intraosseous access in a critical situation.
July-09	Can a Certified Nurse Aide perform phlebotomy?		It was reaffirmed that certified nurse aides may not perform phlebotomies as this is outside their scope of duties referenced by 12 AAC 44.955 (b)(4).
July-09	RN scope of practice Appendix C		REPEALED by Board of Nursing
October-09	Vascular Sheath Removal		Under the authority of Sec. 08.68.100 the Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska accepts by assent that a registered nurse, with the appropriate education, demonstration of skill and continued competence may remove vascular sheaths.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

October-09	Conservative sharp debridement		RESOLVED that the Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska finds that conservative sharps debridement is within the scope of practice for a registered nurse who has specialized certification, which documents education with supervised clinical practice under a wound care specialist, the nurse's employer has a policy and procedure in place, there is a health care provider order, and the nurse has evidence of continued competence or ongoing certification.
October-09	Explanatory Statement on all Advisory Opinions		The Board adopted the clarifying statement on all advisory opinions: "An advisory opinion adopted by the Alaska Board of Nursing is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion the Alaska Board of Nursing regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the health and safety of the Alaska healthcare consumer. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training and supervision to assure safety of their patient."

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

October-09	Registered Nurse administered anesthesia		Board amends and readopts the Advisory Opinion on the Registered Nurse Sedating and Anesthetic Agents with amended insertion of subtitles.
October-09			12 AAC 44.447(a) states an advanced nurse practitioner or "ANP" with prescriptive and dispensing authority may dispense a prescription within the ANP's scope of practice only.
October-09	RN identification of medications	Alaska Division of Corrections	It is outside the scope of practice for a RN to identify unlabeled medications.
January-10	Registered Nurse First Assist		Board updates the current AORN position statement on RN First Assist. This function is an expanded RN role. The position statement on RN First Assist was approved by the AORN House of Delegates, December 2005. The surgeon must directly supervise the nurse. The position statement includes, " A nurse may not practice under standing orders or protocols that require the nurse to make medical judgments outside the nurse's scope of practice."

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

April-10	Taking of X-rays		Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska , has determined it is beyond the scope of practice for an ANP, RN, LPN, or CNA to perform x-rays and radiological procedures involving the use of contrast media, use of fluoroscopic equipment, mammography, tomography, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), bone densitometry using ionizing radiation, nuclear medicine, radiation therapy, or computed tomography imaging (CT scan).
April-10	Nurse Licensure Compact		Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska opposes the joining of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) for the reasons set forth in the February 2010 memorandum from Dr Nancy Sanders to the Senate HSS Committee.
July-10	Flexible Sigmoidoscopy performed by Registered Nurse	SouthCentral Foundation	Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the expansion of the Alaska Native Medical Center Training Program RN Performing Flexible Sigmoidoscopy to include the updated training which will allow ANP's and PA's to be available on site at all times.
July-10	Third Trimester Limited Ultrasound	Children's Hospital at Providence Anchorage	Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the expanded scope of practice for RNs at the Children's Hospital at Providence for third trimester limited ultrasound scope of practice and educational requirements. Annual updates are to be presented to the Board each January.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

July-10	Mobile RN Scope of Practice		Are RN's practicing within their scope of practice while working on the ambulance crew? The Board felt that as long as an RN is functioning under Alaska state regulations, the setting was not the issue.
July-10	Limited expansion of RNs taking of X-rays	SEARHC Alicia Roberts Medical Center in Klawock, Haines and Cross Roads	Board of Nursing approved the application to expand the scope of practice for RN's at SEARHC Alicia Roberts Medical Center in Klawock, The SEARHC Haines Health Center in Haines, and the Cross Road Medical Center in Glenallen. RN's must successfully complete the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Healthcare Diagnostic X-ray Imaging class prior to taking x-rays. A yearly update must be provided to the Board in January of each year. Any changes to this program must be approved by the Board before implementation

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

October-10	RN role in the care of the pregnant woman receiving analgesia/anesthesia by catheter techniques (epidural, intrathecal, spinal, PCEA catheters)	Patricia Smith and Keiko Torensen, Mat-Su Regional Medical Center	The Board of Nursing states that the role of the RN in the care of the pregnant Woman receiving analgesia/anesthesia by catheter techniques (epidural, intrathecal, spinal, PCEA catheters), may not 1. rebolus an epidural either by injecting medications into the catheter or increasing the rate of a continuous infusion, 2. Increase/decrease the rate of a continuous infusion, 3. Re-initiate an infusion once it has been stopped, 4. manipulate PCEA doses or dosage intervals, 5. Be responsible for obtaining informed consent for analgesia/anesthesia procedures; however, the nurse may witness the patient signature for informed consent prior to analgesia/anesthesia administration. This standard is from the AWHONN Epidural statement reapproved June 2007.
October-10	CEs for ACLS, PALS, and other advanced courses		The Board of Nursing adopts the ANCC decision that the initial taking of ACLS, PALS, and other advanced courses will be awarded contact hours but not the renewal of these courses.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

January-11	Limited 1st trimester OB ultrasound	Nancy Bienvenue and Roxanne Ehrtel	The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the expanded scope of RN practice to perform limited OB ultrasound if the RN successfully completes a course that follows the National Guidelines of the American Institute of Ultrasound, American College of Obstetricians, and the American College of Radiology and is taught by a Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer.
January-11	SEARHC request for approval of RN's taking X-rays		The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved RNs taking x-rays following the same criteria of the previously approved programs at the Alicia Roberts Health Center, Haines Health Center and Cross Roads Medical Center at the Jessie Jim Health Center in Angoon, Kake Health Center and Hoonah Health Center.
January-11	SEARHC request for approval of UAA Limited Radiography Program		The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the UAA Limited Radiography Program as an alternative to ANTHC course.
January-11	Dermabond/Liquidband applications by RN's		The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the application of liquid skin adhesive such as Dermabond, by an RN with an order from and ANP, physician, or PA.

**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

April-11	visual sclerotherapy	Janet Stookey, RN	The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approved the expansion in the scope of practice for an RN to perform visual sclerotherapy if the following requirements are met: The RN is under the direct supervision of a qualified physician, ANP, or PA who has expertise in sclerotherapy. Only an RN who has completed a formal course based upon the core curriculum for sclerotherapy which follows the guidelines of the American College of Phlebology and has had a minimum of 24 hours of supervised one on one training with a qualified physician, ANP or PA is allowed to perform sclerotherapy
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**Alaska Board of Nursing
Scope of Practice
Advisory Opinions
Registered Nurse**

October-11	Nitrous Oxide		The Board determined that the administration of Nitrous Oxide is ONLY within the scope of practice for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNAs) and not RNs.
April-12	ANMC minimal & moderate procedural sedation policy	ANMC Anchorage (site specific)	The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska approves the Minimal & Moderate Sedation Procedure Training Program for RNs, for endoscopy patients at Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage, AK.
April-12	School Nurses (RN)	Mary Bell, RN and Nancy Etl, RN	The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska adopt the 'Medication Administration in the School Setting' Delegation Decision Tree as an advisory opinion based on 12 AAC 44.950 – 12 AAC 44.975 to be posted on the BON website.
April-12	SEARHC request for RNs to perform clinical breast exams	Letia Garrison, RN and Nancy Bleir, RN	The Board of Nursing for the State of Alaska, upon receipt of an institutional nursing policy from SEARHC Wisewoman Woman's Health Program approves RNs to perform clinical breast exams, according to the Clinical Breast examination training & certification from Mammacare