

## STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

**Class Title: Licensed Practical Nurse**

**Class Code: 50660**

**Pay Grade: GH**

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### **A. Purpose:**

Provides patient care within the scope of practice as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) by preparing and administering prescribed medications and treatments, IV therapies, maintaining medical records, and monitoring work of subordinates to ensure quality care is provided and in compliance with patient care procedures and department policies.

### **B. Distinguishing Feature:**

The Licensed Practical Nurse provides direct patient care; prepares and administers prescribed medications, treatments, or therapies; conducts individual and group health care education sessions; and maintains medical charts. Higher level nursing staff serves within the scope of practice as registered nurses.

### **C. Functions:**

*(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)*

1. Monitors and charts patients' behaviors, symptoms, and reactions to medications and dietary needs to provide doctors, nurse practitioners, or physician assistants with accurate information necessary to implement proper patient care and treatment.
  - a. Observes, evaluates, and charts information pertaining to patients' needs.
  - b. Provides patient bedside care and maintenance according to an established nursing care plan.
2. Prepares and administers prescribed medications, treatments, and therapies to ensure correct treatment is administered properly in a timely and competent manner.
  - a. Develops and promotes a therapeutic, clean, and orderly ward environment.
  - b. Orders medications and ward supplies.
  - c. Provides IV therapies as doctor's orders warrant.
3. Instructs, assigns, and monitors work of subordinate direct care personnel to ensure compliance with patient care procedures and hospital, clinic, or ward policies.
4. Conducts individual and group sessions with patients and families to provide information and address concerns such as medication side effects, family planning, first aid, and preventive health care.
5. Assists doctors, nurse practitioners, or physician assistants with rounds, physical examinations, minor surgical treatments, and dressing changes to ensure quality patient care is provided.
  - a. Schedules patients' appointments.
  - b. Obtains and maintains patients' health history records.
  - c. Conducts preliminary general physical examinations by obtaining patients' height, weight, and blood pressure.

6. Collaborates with registered nurses to provide appropriate and efficient direct patient care services.
  - a. Reports status of ward and patients' conditions or symptoms to a registered nurse or doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.
  - b. Works with supervisor to formulate and update nursing care and/or individual treatment plans.
7. Performs other work as assigned.

#### **D. Reporting Relationships:**

The Licensed Practical Nurse typically reports to the charge nurse. Typically does not supervise, but may assign and monitor work of direct care staff.

#### **E. Challenges and Problems:**

Challenges include correctly contributing to the assessment of physical conditions and medication side effects on patients; administering and monitoring medications and treatments; maintaining current medical records; instructing and monitoring direct care staff; ensuring that patient care is completed in a timely, accurate, and efficient manner; managing conflicts between clients; and applying and administering new or changed patient treatment plans.

Problems include violent and/or disruptive clients/patients and making correct evaluations on large numbers of patients.

#### **F. Decision-making Authority:**

Decisions include observing, contributing to assessments, and recording a variety of client symptoms, behaviors, and needs and reporting all data to a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant or registered nurse; administering medications and treatments under standing orders; and determining and providing needed emergency care.

Decisions referred include changes in patient treatment or care, critical situations requiring higher level medical care, and prescribed medications or treatments.

#### **G. Contact with Others:**

Daily contact with patients to provide treatments and medication; registered nurses to report daily clinic or ward situations, discuss patient care and staffing, and receive instructions; direct care staff to give work direction and to obtain and receive information on patient care; and with the pharmacy to obtain medications. Weekly contact with doctors, nurse practitioners, and/or physician assistants to receive medication and treatment orders and directions concerning laboratory follow-up work and social workers and psychiatrists to ensure continuity in patient care.

#### **H. Working Conditions:**

The incumbent works in a clinic, ward, or hospital setting with patients who may be uncooperative, violent, or have behavioral problems. The incumbent is required to do heavy lifting when moving patients and is exposed to a variety of communicable diseases.

**I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- the principles and techniques of patient care;
- hospital and clinic routine and procedures;
- IV therapy;
- the care and use of medical equipment and supplies.

Ability to:

- evaluate client behaviors, symptoms, and effects of medications;
- follow directions;
- prepare and maintain records, charts, and reports;
- apply nursing techniques as delegated by physicians or registered nurses;
- establish and maintain effective relationships with patients and staff;
- direct and monitor direct care personnel.

**J. Licenses and Certification:**

Must be licensed as a practical nurse in South Dakota.