




## TNA Delegation Results Overview





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Delegation in Nursing Practice TNA member Shelley Cohen, BS, RN, is conducting an assessment of current nurse knowledge related to delegation and the Tennessee Nurse Practice Act. This is a collaborative project between Cohen's MSN program and TNA. The results of the assessment will be used by TNA in developing an online educational program that serves to: - Assist nurses with a review of standards and regulations as they relate to delegation- Provide realistic scenarios that demonstrate how to apply these rules appropriately- Be a resource for ongoing review for both the new and seasoned nurse. To be included in this review, please complete the following brief assessment tool. For members who prefer a phone interview, please email Shelley Cohen directly at educate@hru.net and she will arrange it. We appreciate your participation in this important work and look forward to updating TNA members on the progress of this project in winter 2009.





### 1. When was the last time you reviewed the Tennessee Nurse Practice Act?

< 1 year ago		53	46%
> 1 year ago		56	49%
Never		5	4%

### 2. Did you reference it for information related to delegation?

Yes		34	30%
No		80	70%
Total		114	100%

### 3. How would you estimate your understanding of Tennessee rules that relate to nursing delegation?

Understand thoroughly		8	7%
Understand fairly well		58	51%
Understand somewhat		41	36%
Do not understand		7	6%
Total		114	100%

### 4. Are there any aspects of these rules you find particularly confusing or difficult to understand?

Yes		29	25%
No		85	75%

Total	114	100%
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**7.** Where would you look for answers to any questions you had regarding delegation?

Someone in your organization		27	24%
TN Nurses Association website		15	13%
TN Board of Nursing website		60	53%
Other, please specify		12	11%
Total		114	100%

**8.** Are you aware that the Rules for Delegation vary by state?

Yes		81	71%
No		33	29%
Total		114	100%

The following final questions are for TNA to assess nurses' current knowledge related to some of the specifics of delegation.

**9.** If an online educational tool that reviewed delegation and the Tennessee Nurse Practice Act was available to TNA members, would you make time to use it?

Yes		109	96%
No		5	4%
Total		114	100%

**10.** Although there are some nursing tasks you can delegate, such as determining how much urine is in a foley catheter bag, you cannot delegate the nursing process itself. This means you cannot delegate the nursing process of determining if this output is adequate for this particular patient. Is this your understanding of the delegation rules?



Yes		104	91%
No		10	9%
Total		114	100%

**11.** Have you ever heard of the five Rights of Delegation?

Yes		45	39%
No		69	61%

Total	114	100%
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**12.** Do you know what the five Rights of Delegation are?

Yes		25	22%
No		89	78%
Total		114	100%

**14.** Did you know that your State Legislature has the ability to change the Nurse Practice Act?

Yes		95	83%
No		19	17%
Total		114	100%

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5. Are there any aspects of these rules you find particularly confusing or difficult to understand? If so, please explain.

1	In my particular job, most of the delegation involves people who have no health care credentials at all- and the guidelines seem to be geared more towards delegation to other health care type people.
2	There is a pervasive lack of clarity in guidance provided to RNs who are considering delegation to unlicensed persons. A task list would be very helpful, as would a format for documenting teaching and ongoing provision of supervision.
3	While I had referenced the NPA, I had not looked at BON position statements and was not really aware they existed. I found these when I again accessed the NPA after I looked at your survey. These help to clarify some of NPA. I wonder how many other nurses have not looked at these.
4	NA
5	LPN tasks limit
6	HIPPA
7	The technical terminology
8	***for answer 8-no I didn't know they varied by state, but it makes sense as practice acts vary by state.
9	limited to no awareness of exactly what they are.
10	what can and can't be delegated esp. to APN's
11	There isn't anything concrete.
12	I am not sure that I know anything at all about the rules relating to delegation other than those learned on the job.
13	Can an LPN complete assessments, or any part of an assessment. (ie. assess and reassess pain)
14	na
15	Rules are not clear that a nurse needs a written plan to delegate and what those components should include. And that they are accountable and that if they leave a setting they need to resend the delegation. Confusion that an LPN can delegate to an unlicensed person.
16	Even though I think I know the rules well (as I have taught them for years in a BSN nursing program), I find that most students and RNs in practice find the implications of the rules confusing. The problem is that MOST employers ignore the rules in order to staff in a cheaper way, with fewer RNs (IMHO).
17	Why the TN Nurse Practice Act is not available broadly through Internet Access
18	The way it is worded is very confusing. It needs to be more simple to read
19	I found more information regarding delegation in "Rules and Regulation for Nursing" Rules of Tennessee Board of Nursing, than I did in the Nurse Practice Act.
20	It was too long ago that I accessed it- so not sure
21	can't remember

22	I have not looked at the rules so I don't know for sure.
23	Duties as assigned to LPN's
24	interpretation by supervisors
25	There is ambiguity r/t what the RN can delegate. Oftentimes it states the nursing/medical assistant can perform a certain task "under the supervision of the nurse." There needs to be a clear distinction of which tasks can truly be delegated.
26	delegation to paramedics in the ED setting
27	Not necessarily, at times I need to check institutional guidelines or state scopes of practice for those I am delegating to - or teaching students to delegate to. Some institutions have different guidelines for ancillary personnel too.
28	refusal to accept an assignment
29	The concept of "licensed personnel"--in other states in which I practiced the LPN has a very limited role. It is much larger in TN
30	I do not remember specific enough information to truly answer this question accurately. Sorry
31	I was looking for the things RNs can delegate to LPNs and it seemed very vague to me.
32	Institutions seem to be creating exceptions to the rules that then have the effect of making things very muddy

6. If you had the power to change one thing about how nurses are taught the skill of delegation, what would it be?

#	Response
1	I was never taught delegation in nursing school at all. In the work environment I was told "learn to delegate". I was self taught except for what I read.
2	Clearer guidelines
3	It would be nice if there were more concrete answers, but I realize that is probably impossible! There is a LOT of grey area and that means it is difficult to expect everyone in a program to respond in the same way.
4	ownership
5	Empowering nurses that it is ok to delegate. Many times we believe we must do it all and in some cases our preceptors tell us it is better to just do it yourself.
6	don't know
7	Experience in clinicals while still in school.
8	I would like to see consistent and clear guidelines or rules.
9	give clear guidelines and have role play practice.
10	There is a lot of gray area, especially in nursing care areas besides the hospital. For example in school nursing, it is legal to delegate "assisting with medication" to unlicensed personnel, but under the TN BON Position Statements on Administration of Medications in School it says under Assisting students with medication by unlicensed school personnel, #2 "The student's condition for which medication is authorized and or prescribed is stable.' How is a student's condition stable when they are in the process of a seizure? Yet they have to approve a law for diazepam to be administered by unlicensed personnel at school.
11	When I was in LPN school, during our clinicals we were given the opportunity to be a "charge nurse" over our group. This opportunity was not available in my RN program, ASN or BSN.
12	Critical decision-making related to the assessment of the patient
13	Use more examples in the teaching
14	RNs need to see delegation within the larger scope of teamwork.
15	Make more interesting
16	I don't remember being taught about the skill of delegation. I have a BSN so probably was taught, but don't clearly remember it. Everywhere I've ever worked the institution told us what mix of staff would be available and it was my job as charge nurse to determine (based on institution policy about which type of licensed or non-licensed personnel can do which tasks) who would do what when functioning as charge nurse. I would appreciate more thorough training about the specifics of delegation rules, but then one important thing in implementing them would be how to graciously, with professionalism and tact delegate to others who may not want to do something that they can and should do.
17	how to do it

18	Eliminate LPNs, delegation clear from RN to non-licensed personnel
19	What to delegate and the reasons for delegation.
20	CLEAN CLEAR RULES THAT ARE UNIFORM FOR EACH HOSPITAL/FACILITY
21	I suggest the use of realistic scenarios as a teaching tool that encourages critical thinking with the student providing documentation from the nurse practice act to justify the response.
22	use of acuity tools to assign # and type of staff-- I don't think many tools are realistic or evidence based, except the Johnson Model acuity tools at UCLA, which have been research tested and the focus of nursing PHD dissertations for many years.
23	no comment
24	Simply that it IS taught.
25	to have autonomy
26	To be more assertive and strong.
27	Nurses need to delegate with authority and conviction. Stop being wishy washy about telling others what to do. Take charge!
28	Mandatory Nurse Extern Programs
29	I don't know.
30	unsure what delegation is
31	No aspect of direct patient care would qualify for delegation to UAPs. Nurses were never meant to go to 4 years of university education to babysit less qualified individuals.
32	That they also have authority over hiring / employment supervision over the delegee.
33	practice it more during clinical hours on the floor
34	Doing tasks alone doesn't make nursing important, understanding why and how is are great factors also.
35	no role modeling because that can be incorrect information. There should be a guideline within the organization of how they want their assistive personnel utilized-
36	More case studies reviews of real situations.
37	I don't really know
38	to be more assertive in ensuring the accuracy of the information. Often we may have a UAP that we know "fudges" things like vital signs, and they become deeply offended when we double check. I think perhaps the focus of the delegations skill teaching needs be on the end of the UAP's--that it is a privilege for them to be practicing under OUR license.
39	Each be able to receive a copy of the nurse practice acts upon passing state boards. They are responsible for seeking out updates after that. This is how South Dakota made sure that nurses were aware of their nurse practice acts when I was in nursing school.
40	I think delegation is "breezed over" in nursing schools today.

41	That they have more practice with delegation in school.
42	have a unified standard for what LPN nurses can not perform for RN's to refer to. It is still a little mirky and the hospital sometimes fills in the blanks which can be tricky.
43	just more clear on rules and regs
44	Not sure
45	Nothing
46	not sure
47	stress importance of delegation at the baccalaureate level
48	I think this issue should be emphasized more in nursing schools.
49	Respect the one who delegates to you and visa versa
50	clear cut boundaries of responsibilities because they differ from institution to institution.
51	Mandatory continuing education and also consider what the content of education is in nursing schools.
52	none i feel that there is information out there to learn about delegation in all forms. Visual, Graphics, Concept Maps, Narrative, Lisining, Video etc.
53	I'm not sure
54	I would want RN's to realize that they need to be willing to do any aspect of patient care. If they are not willing to give baths and clean up patients then they will not be a very good example nor will they always get the quality care needed for delegated tasks.
55	How to delegate without seeming too authoritative and bossy. Better understanding of who can do what
56	I don't know at the present time
57	Taught how to collaborate
58	To be sure that they understand that delegation is for a specific task but does not delegate their responsibility and accountability
59	Opportunity to talk through a simulated situation using rationale, feedback, references.
60	Clinical scenarios would be helpful.
61	State wide meetings to present and discuss aspects for persons having confusion. I come from a state that did just that when delegation became the current hot topic of question.
62	To make them very aware that eventhough tasks may be delegated, the RN is still responsible for the patient.
63	Provide a more thorough representation of this information in basic nursing education.
64	Give more practice on how to do it without belittling the person to whom the task is delegated

65	more emphasis early in nursing curriculum
66	Understanding about judgement and assesment, the act of delegating, what the difference is between giving instructions, training and supervision
67	Conflict resolution/effective communication
68	They need to be aware that if the person tells them they are not familiar with the delegated job, they are responsible for negative outcome.
69	provide scenarios that expressly illustrate the concepts of delegation. Make it a requirement for all hospital orientations for ALL nursing staff (RNs, LPNs, NA and certainly anyone in nursing management.
70	Information and practice be included in Leadership and Management classes in school of nursing curriculum
71	before being put in high delegation positions - all individuals need to experience the job of a tech. there fore will have a better more realistic understanding of how everyone has to work together and everyone is an important part of nursing. quick overview on organization structure.
72	Improve the knowledge of the mentors assisting the new charge nurse, graduate, etc.
73	More emphasis on the benefits of understanding the concept of delegation. Most RN's do not understand they are delegating they believe they are just following the rules of the facility f .
74	Do research with nurses in long-standing practice and have clear cut examples of delegation issues, problems and responsibilites of delegation.
75	It would not be so much how nurses are taught, it would be to have more specificity in what tasks LPN's and aides can/cannot perform. There seems to be inconsistent interpretations of the state guidelines/practice act.
76	Include it as an improtant part of the curriculum and clinical training
77	Do so with tact and diplomacy
78	Delegate only to individuals you feel competent with.
79	Would start teaching this from the beginning of nursing school about the differing levels of staff and what can and can not be delegated.
80	Better integration throughout curriculum.
81	make sure to be prepared
82	Clear boundaries. No gray area
83	unknown
84	Clarify the legal responsibility
85	cannot think of anything
86	Nurses are not taught about delegation-it would be a good thing to do this.
87	more scenarios in class

88	not sure. would need to know more about the rule.
89	More specific rules across all states. Sometimes practice exam questions appear to differ about delegation based on state by state practices.
90	how to respond when the subordinate says "no" and 'gets away' with doing so
91	I would like to see a return demonstration to assure understanding
92	Hands-on application/ role play. A brief discussion in a leadership course is not sufficient. Conflict management must also be taught in correlation with delegation.
93	More examples.
94	include skills for reacting to temperaments of people being delegating to; delegating to charge RNs and other RNs; best practices in delegation (like delegating to support staff may be better received if the responsibilities are discussed at the beginning of the shift)
95	accountability
96	Mandatory check off of rules/ regulations with license renewal, including awareness of (and where to locate) state scopes of practice regulations (LPNs, RNs, APNs, etc) and/or job descriptions for associated institutions.
97	I think the skill of delegation should be taught in nursing school, but should have a standard format across the board for some of the delegation skills that are the same nationally. Also, those nursing schools in a particular state should teach the delegation skills appropriate for that state. Even though some nursing students may practice out-of-state; I believe the majority stay in the state where they attended nursing school.
98	More real life examples
99	Standardization of healthcare facility policies related to Nurse Practice Act
100	more time spent learning the difference between supervision and delegation
101	Until they pass NCLEX they need to understand delegation on a national scope-not local or state
102	Using specific examples and case studies to help nurses problem solve and think critically about situations
103	some how have it included in the list of competencies that nurses need to have.
104	Teaching more about it in schools.
105	That it is okay to delegate.
106	I don't have a preference
107	That delegation would be taught in their basic nursing program and then reinforced with real life examples from their work setting/place of employment.
108	I would like nurses to feel empowered to delegate.
109	I suppose that there could be more "practice" time for them to see the implementation

110	I am not sure, delegating becomes diluted over time and constraints of the workload.
111	How to help them feel they are not just giving someone else their work.
112	I am currently okay with the delegation
113	I think a video, tutorial or PowerPoint that is easy to understand and standardized would help present the material.
114	that a training session be developed for all nurses especially those in practice

13. Please list the Rules of Delegation that you know:

#	Response
1	Can't recall them all without looking them up.
2	right skill right time
3	The article is on my desk! The right task, person, circumstances, directions (communication), and supervision and followup.
4	Right: person, direction/instruction, task, situation, supervision/follow up
5	Right Person, Task, Direction, Circumstances and Supervision
6	Right patient Right Task Right Person Right Circumstances Under right supervision
7	Person must be prepared and have the experience to perform the activity that is delegated. The delegator must follow up and evaluate the task
8	I don't know any of the specific rules.
9	none
10	Right person Right task Right reason Right time Right supervision
11	Right task Right personnel Right circumstances Right direction Right supervision
12	not all of them... right task right patient right skill mix right supervision
13	right task right circumstances right person right direction right supervision

14	none
15	right patient, right task/skill, right time, assess ability of staff to complete skill,
16	Right Task Right Circumstance Right Person Right Direction & Communication Right Evaluation & Feedback
17	1. the person is trained for the task 2. adequate supervision is available 3. the patient is safe and the outcome is presumable. 4. The task can be done safely 5. the staff member has shown they can perform the task.
18	none
19	An RN can't delegate Assessment, Education or nursing judgement.
20	I am not aware of the 5 rights of delegation
21	correct task to delegate, correct person to delegate to, communication of expectation
22	Right task, directions, person, circumstance and supervision
23	Never heard of this
24	NCSBN 5 Rights of Delegation (1) Right Task (2) Right Circumstance (3) Right Person (4) Right Direction/Communication (5) Right Supervision
25	right role function, right education for function
26	Right education, right degree of expertise.
27	I can't remember the specific rules, but I know the gist of them. Such as NOT delegating the Nursing Process, and nurses having the right to NOT accept an assignment that was delegated to them, for which they have not been educated, nor prepared. That includes RNs being delegated to take on a task in another area for which they are not trained (such as being floated to ICU as a peds nurse, etc.). Also, I believe the rights include the right of the nurse to BE informed of a person's abilities before they are to delegate work to them (such as knowing what a nursing assistant has been trained to do- or a nurse tech).
28	Once you delegate you must supervise The delegate is accountable Delegate only what is within their scope
29	right person right procedure right time right level of education

30	Allowed to delegate nursing tasks only to persons whom have the skill level to manage that task.
31	Right task, right circumstance, right person, right directions and communication, right supervision
32	Don't know them
33	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Task must be one that can be delegated according to practice act.</li> <li>2. Delegate to right person.</li> <li>3. Clear communication to delegatee.</li> <li>4. Adequate resources (time, equipment, support)</li> <li>5. Follow-up (evaluation step).</li> </ol>
34	Delegation has to be to a person competent in the skill delegated to them. There should be a policy to cover this delegation.
35	within scope of practice
36	not sure
37	I do not know what these are but I have heard of them vaguely.
38	Right task, right person, right circumstance
39	Tasks that are routine and performed on stable clients can be delegated - the interpretation of results must be clearly specified so it is known when to act quickly on any findings outside of the normal range.
40	Delegate only those tasks that the individual has been trained for and you feel comfortable with their competency (familiar with abilities - having observed directly - or evidence of positive evaluation in task - including state licensure for LPNs/ RNS, APNs). Ensure clear understanding of task at hand, and try to ensure the most effective circumstances-don't delegate a task that sets someone up to fail.
41	Right task, right circumstances, right person, right directions/communication, and right supervision/evaluation
42	<p>Right task  Right person  Right directions and monitoring communication  right supervision and evaluation  right circumstances</p>
43	<p>the right task  under the right circumstance  to the right person  with the right directions  under the right supervision</p>
44	Have they been educated in the task; have they been evaluated in the task; are they licensed to do the task and are they allowed to do the task based on the state and agency rules
45	Right person, task, level of education to do so, Circumstances, Direction/Supervision/Communication
46	<p>right person  right task  right time  right information  right supervision  right follow-up</p>

47	Right skill (one that can be delegated), right circumstances (where outcome is likely to be predictable), right supervision available (direct or indirect), right educational preparation (skill has been taught to the person receiving the delegation)
48	the "rights"??? 1.right task, 2.right circumstances, 3.right person, 4.right communication, 5. right supervision

15. Please list any additional comments you may have.

#	Response
1	School Nurses (and others) practice in a field where laws have been written that override the nurse practice act- so we are caught between a rock and a hard place... we either violate one law or another when we do or do not delegate many things.
2	To # 14 it makes me sick that a lay person "legislator" can tell us how to practice nursing, because they do not want to fund an area that takes care of children who don't vote for them because there is no money. and this was before the economic down turn. Part of this is our falt because nurses who don't work in these areas don't know. I was once one of those nurses. Many Nurses are complacent about something they don't have to deal with.
3	The last time that I looked at our TN nurse practice act it was a little vague about what LPN nurses could not do. I wish it was more specific for RNs that are in leadership positions in clinical settings.
4	be carefull
5	I need to become better informed.
6	This is the most misunderstood topic in nursing. Many BON have clarifications on this topic. TN needs to clarify as well. We have many LPNs, CNAs, and MAs practicing outside their scope. What is frustrating is that many employers choose to disregard & ignore the BON & NPA. Thank you for what you are doing!
7	Along with a Tool - TNA should assist in sponsoring workshops on delegation across all types of settings where delegation is delivered, e.g. Nurses who are subcontracted in group homes where unlicensed personnel already have Board Exemption to administer medications - There is a push from insurance companies, MCO's and other state entities to due to cost of the delivery of nursing services to allow unlicensed personnel through delgation to perform glucose monioting.
8	Any education on Delegation is very much needed. Each time I taught the subject to RNs I had them in an uproar- as they said that they had never heard of the rules, nor were they practiced where they worked. This is long overdue. Thanks!
9	I think the online education would be fantastic for everyone. Availability would be to everyone not just a few.
10	Thought only board of nursing decided this.
11	As I did this survey I went back and searched the Nurse Practice Act, Tennessee Board of Nursing Rules and Regs, google search rules of delegation. I'm a registered nurse, and work as a college nurse. The quick search today reminded me why I decided to not delegate any of my duties when I looked for this information several years ago. There is very little guidance available.
12	reference number 9: I would use this for myself first and then as a teaching model for the nurses.
13	i would definetly like to know more about all the rules of delegation and how the state has the ability to change the nurse practice act.
14	This seems like very important and needed work. Thanks for your effort and I look forward to seeing this information available as described.
15	please include clarification that says what an LPN can delegate vs an RN in our state?
16	this is really a very important study, as a legal nurse consultant, I am constantly amazed and sadden by the number of nurses that have no idea of what the practice act is for or what it says. the lack of knowledge regarding delegation falls in about the same category. I look forward to your results.. Good Luck