

Professional Practice Corner

Med Chapter 8 translated: II

Section 8.07 defines PA practice. This section states that PAs provide supervised medical care. Supervision is defined as “to coordinate, direct and inspect the accomplishments of another”. This was intentionally left very broad in order to give physicians a fair amount of flexibility in how they supervise PAs. A few specific supervisory responsibilities are outlined in sections 8.08 and 8.10, and these will be discussed in a later article.

In Wisconsin, the scope of practice for PAs is primarily determined by our supervising physician. PAs in Wisconsin can perform any medical task that our supervising physicians delegate to us as long as it is within the supervising physician's scope of practice and does not “exceed our educational training or experience” and appears in the list of medical care tasks outlined in 8.07.

It is generally up to the physician to determine whether a PA has the educational training and experience to perform a specific task. There are a few exceptions to this rule. Certain procedures such as pregnancy termination can be performed by physicians only. PAs are also prohibited by law from practicing dentistry, dental hygiene, optometry, chiropractic, podiatry and acupuncture.

That is it...Section 8.07 contains no other guidelines or rules regarding PA practice. This section is notable for what it does not contain. For instance, the definition of medical care tasks does not limit PAs to a specific list of tasks. There are no rules addressing verbal orders. There are no rules requiring co-signature of all charts. (There are some rules about co-signing charts if a prescription is prepared. This will be addressed in later articles.)