

VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT # 90-5

TITLE: Administration of Neuromuscular Blocking Agents for
Conscious Sedation

The Board of Nursing confirms that the administration of medications as prescribed by any person authorized by law to prescribe is a part of the definition of professional nursing in Virginia law. In regard to the administration of Neuro-Blocking agents, the Board of Nursing advises that:

1. The definition of nursing authorizes nurses to administer drugs prescribed by an individual licensed to prescribe.
2. The law and regulations do not appear to limit the types of drugs or the places where drugs are administered.
3. It is important to know the purpose for which the drug is administered, i.e., sedation or anesthesia.
4. A question might arise if a drug is administered for the purpose of anesthesia, since regulations require the additional license for the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.
5. The Board stressed the importance of adequate initial and ongoing competency for those who will be administering these drugs since the Board, in its Regulations, has defined unprofessional conduct to include assuming duties within the practice of nursing without adequate training or when competency has not been maintained.
6. The decision to implement the policy rests with the institution.

It is understood that the nurse administering any drug has the responsibility to be knowledgeable about the drug and know how to respond if reactions occur.

Accepted: November 1990; November 23, 1993

Revised: November 18, 2003 [combines and amends previous 90-5 & 90-11]