

Nursing Practice Update
9/12/97
Sharp Wound Debridement

On September 11, 1997, the Board determined that conservative sharp wound debridement of **non-viable tissue** is within the Arkansas State Board of Nursing Scope of Practice Position Statement for **registered nurses**. The following excerpts from that position statement should clarify the Board's response to this question.

“Changing curricula may expand the scope of practice of new graduates over time. Practicing nurses are expected to keep current with these changes through formal, continuing or inservice educational experiences. These experiences should be designed to evaluate and provide documentation of appropriate extension of knowledge and practice... The nursing decision to carry out a health care act should always include consideration of the nurse's ability to prove by documentation and appropriate knowledge and skill base that the nurse is competent to perform the act.”

In summary, the Board's scope of practice position statement allows the nurse to perform acts which he or she has been taught in nursing school or which have been learned since graduation in an organized educational experience. The health care act must be generally recognized by the profession as being within the scope of practice of the APN, RNP, RN, LPN or LPTN. Each agency should have policies and procedures/protocols in place for each act performed and documentation of each nurse's education and demonstrated competence to perform these additional procedures.