



PENNSYLVANIA STATE BOARD OF NURSING  
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TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing

DATE: March 26, 1997

RE: Alternative/Complementary Therapies

On February 25, 1997, the Board discussed the construct that nurses should employ when considering whether to undertake performance of alternative/complementary therapies. It is the Board's position that anytime a nurse contemplates undertaking the performance of an alternative or complementary therapy, the nurse should consider all of the following:

1. Does the therapy fall within the nurse's scope of practice as defined by Section 2 of the Professional Nursing Law (RN Law), Section 2 of the Practical Nurse Law (PN Law) and Sections 21.1, 21.11-21.18, 21.141, 21.145, 21.148, 21.251, 21.282a-21.284, and 21.411-21.414 of the Board's regulations?
2. Does the therapy conform to and is it within an ethical or quality standard of the profession, i.e. those embraced by the professional community in this Commonwealth as; a) required by Section 14(a)(9) of the RN Law, Section 16(a)(8) of the PN Law, and Sections 21.11(d) and 21.145(d) of the Board's Regulations; b) as noted in promulgated standards of reputable nursing associations; and c) as embraced in professional nursing literature?
3. Could the practice of performing the therapy be considered negligence or incompetence in the practice of nursing as prohibited by Section 14(a)(1) of the RN Law, Section 16(a)(2) of the PN Law, and Sections 21.18(a)(1), 21.11(b), (c), and 21.148(a)(1) of the Board's regulations?
4. Could the practice of the therapy be considered fraud or deceit in the practice of nursing as prohibited by 14(a)(4) of the RN Law and Section 16(a)(4) of the PN Law?
5. Is the therapy taught as part of a nursing curriculum in an approved nursing education program?

**REMEMBER: AS WITH ANY PROCEDURE OR ACTIVITY, THE NURSE HAS THE LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE THAT ALL CONDUCT CONFIRMS TO THE LAWS AND THE BOARD'S REGULATIONS.**

Approved 3/26/97  
Citations Revised 11/21/97  
Revised 7/9/13