

TEMPLATE LETTER TO STATE BOARD OF NURSING

[Insert Date]

[Insert Name and Address]

Dear [Insert Name State Board of Nursing Chief Executive]:

The [Insert State] State Council of the Emergency Nurses Association wishes to take this opportunity to affirm its position regarding the role of emergency nurses in the care of patients requiring analgesia and sedation.

[Insert State Council] acknowledges that the administration of procedural sedation and analgesia for the therapeutic, diagnostic, or surgical procedures is a specialized skill that requires specific knowledge and competencies including the ability to recognize and intervene should complications occur. A growing body of literature exists that supports the safe use of a large variety of agents for procedural sedation and analgesia in the emergency department (ED). Ketamine, midazolam, fentanyl, propofol, and etomidate are just a few of these agents in common usage. Respiratory depression is the most concerning of side effects related to the use of these agents; however, careful preparation and administration have been shown to prevent harmful sequelae.

The National Guidelines Clearinghouse™ (NGC) is a comprehensive database of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines and related documents. NGC is an initiative of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In March 2005 NGC published **Clinical Policy: Procedural Sedation and Analgesia in the Emergency Department** (www.guideline.gov). This document provides a comprehensive review of the current scientific literature and recommendations for clinical practice that outline the safe administration of sedatives or dissociative agents with or without analgesics in the ED. Unlike most promulgated advisory materials, such as manufacturing inserts, those references in the NGC are truly evidence-based.

ENA agrees with physician colleagues that it is important for individual institutions to ensure that all individuals performing moderate or deep sedation are trained to:

- ▶ Administer pharmacologic agents to predictably achieve desired levels of sedation;
- ▶ Monitor patients and maintain them at desired levels of sedation; and
- ▶ Manage complications observed during procedural sedation and analgesia.

The Emergency Nurses Association firmly believes that professional scope of practice should be based on scientific evidence and consensus-based guidelines; efforts to restrict the use of specific medications are impractical and not in the best interests of patient care. Instead, ENA encourages policies that ensure proper education and credentialing of nurses, continuous patient monitoring by qualified nurses who have no other responsibilities that would compromise the nurse's ability to adequately monitor the patient during or after the procedure, and the guaranteed availability of resuscitation equipment at the patient's bedside. ENA contends that procedural sedation and analgesia in the ED must be supervised by an emergency physician or other appropriately trained and credentialed specialist capable of emergency airway management and supports a policy that an institutionally-credentialed registered nurse working in the emergency department should be able to deliver medications used for procedural sedation and analgesia. We believe that facilitating interventional procedures and minimizing pa-

tient suffering are essential steps to proactively addressing pain and anxiety and will thereby improve quality of care and patient satisfaction with their health care experience.

I and other representatives from [Insert State Council Name] would like to meet with you regarding this issue and will be contacting your office shortly to arrange for an appointment. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me for any additional information or clarification that you may need.

Sincerely yours,

[Insert State Council President Name and Credentials]

[Insert contact information]

Attachments:

1. Clinical policy: Procedural Sedation and Analgesia in the Emergency Department
2. ENA Position State: Procedural Sedation and Analgesia in the Emergency Department
3. Joint Position Statement by ENA and the American College of Emergency Physicians: Delivery of Agents for Procedural Sedation and Analgesia.