

# ASK A PRACTICE ADVISOR – GRAD NURSING

by Della Stumborg, Nursing Practice Advisor



**Question:** What are the limitations on the practice of the graduate nurse until licensure to practice as a registered nurse can be obtained?

**Answer:** This is a common question from both employers and new graduates awaiting the results of the RN exams.

*The Registered Nurses Act, 1988, Section 20* defines who can be registered as a graduate nurse and issued a temporary license to practice registered nursing. The category of graduate nurse membership would normally apply to:

1. A person awaiting the results of their RN exams after successfully completing an approved basic nursing program in Saskatchewan.
2. A person, outside Saskatchewan, whose nursing education program is recognized as equivalent and is awaiting successful completion of their RN exam.

Those registered as a graduate nurse and issued a temporary license are bound by the SRNA bylaws governing practice under temporary licenses. Bylaw IV, Section 3(2) states that the graduate nurse must practice under the supervision of a registered nurse using a collaborative practice approach.

This means that a graduate nurse works in collaboration with a registered nurse and would never work completely independently. (S)he must have access to a registered nurse when at work. In the Home Care and Public Health environment, the graduate nurse can provide nursing care in a client's home once a registered nurse has determined that the work assignment is appropriate and a registered

nurse is accessible for the duration of the graduate nurse's work time. The initial assessment of the client should be done by the registered nurse; consultation of the registered nurse with the graduate nurse should occur as necessary prior to an assigned home visit.

In acute, long term care and public health or community clinic environments, the graduate nurse must have access to a registered nurse on site. In more complex environments, it may be more appropriate to have a graduate nurse work in the presence of a registered nurse at all times. It is important to note that the bylaw specifically states that the graduate nurse cannot be certified to perform nursing procedures by transfer of medical function.

At all times, the overriding principles of assignment of care and responsibility must reflect the safety of the client(s) and the appropriateness of the practitioner to be given the assignment.

If you have further questions regarding this or other practice issues, please contact a nursing practice advisor at: Calls outside Regina: 1-800-667-9945 (ext. 237). Calls within Regina 359-4237 or Email: [dcummings@srna.org](mailto:dcummings@srna.org)

## References:

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