

Professional Health for Nurses 2019

Ethical and Legal Aspects for Healthy Nurses

The following is part of an original article posted 2017 by Nancy J. Brent, MS, JD, RN in Nurse.com (<https://www.nurse.com/blog/2017/02/07/get-legally-healthy-in-2017/>) which sums up the legal responsibilities of nursing in a few excellent bulleted points:

- 1) Join a professional association to keep up with current issues and ways to enhance your practice and your profession.
- 2) Keep current in your area of nursing specialty by reading nursing journals and attending conferences, continuing education programs and in-services your employer offers.
- 3) Consider obtaining an advanced degree or certification in your area of nursing practice.
- 4) If you do not have your own professional liability insurance policy, consider the benefits, two of which include an attorney who represents you if you are named in a professional negligence suit and coverage for professional licensure defense should allegations of a violation of your nurse practice act arise.
- 5) Adhere to standards of practice in your area of nursing specialty.
- 6) Never undertake a patient care responsibility for which you are not competent to do.
- 7) Document your nursing care completely, honestly, accurately and in a timely manner.
- 8) Never engage in bullying with staff or with patients.
- 9) Delegate patient care consistent with professional association guidelines and your nurse practice act.
- 10) Never practice outside your scope of practice as defined in your nurse practice act and its rules.
- 11) Attend a board of nursing meeting in your state and consider applying for a board position when one becomes available.
- 12) Participate in the legislative process to ensure your nursing practice is not compromised by amendments or additions to your nurse practice act that are unwelcome. Become active on the national level to ensure that healthcare generally, and nursing specifically, are not compromised by amendments, repeals or unwanted additions to federal law.

Individuals who need advice on a specific incident or work situation should contact a nurse attorney or attorney in their state. Visit [The American Association of Nurse Attorneys website](#) to search its attorney referral database by state.

The ANA defines a healthy nurse as “someone who actively focuses on creating and maintaining a balance and synergy of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, personal and professional well-being.”

Education is the Portal to Professional Health



RN, ADN, BSN
LPN, APN CNS
CRNA, CNM,
DNP, PhD,

<https://www.cannabisnursesnetwork.com/>

<https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/News/Pages/04232019.aspx>

<https://www.marijuanamoment.net/new-congressional-bill-requires-va-to-study-medical-marijuana-for-veterans/>

<https://why.org/articles/access-to-treatment-for-opioid-addiction-eased-for-those-on-medicaid-in-nj/>

<https://why.org/articles/pa-medical-marijuana-rule-change-will-let-patients-vape/>

<https://why.org/articles/more-aging-americans-are-using-pot-to-soothe-what-ails-them/>

<https://acphospitalist.org/archives/2017/01/marijuana-policies-hospital.htm#.XLnYFQWtgPQ.email>

<https://www.newjerseylawyersblog.com/a-wild-employment-law-decision-on-medical-marijuana/#.XLnUWXqIm9M.gmail>

<http://www.roi-nj.com/2018/04/17/healthcare/health-care-officials-grappling-with-issues-surrounding-medical-marijuana-use-in-hospitals/>

NURSING IN THE CROSSHAIRS

There were many topics of legal interest for NJ Nurses this year. Take your pick from the following:

Medical and recreational marijuana legislation, medication assisted dying for the terminally ill, maternal and women's health issues in NJ, mandatory opiate related CEUs for licensure, safe staffing, compact licensure, global nursing initiatives, underserved populations, opiate addiction, nurse burnout and bullying concerns, and social media responsibilities.

1. Opioid Continuing Education Requirement

As a condition of biennial license renewal, all registered professional nurses and all licensed practical nurses must complete one (1) credit of continuing education concerning prescription opioid drugs, including alternatives to opioids for managing and treating pain, and the risks and signs of opioid abuse, addiction, and diversion.