



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION
2016-481A

Kim Glazier, Executive Director
Oklahoma Board of Nursing
2915 N. Classen Blvd., Ste. 524
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106

August 5, 2016

Dear Executive Director Glazier:

This office has received your request for a written Attorney General Opinion regarding agency action that the Oklahoma Board of Nursing intends to take pursuant to a consent agreement in Board case 3.042.17. The proposed action is to require the licensee to undergo an evaluation for substance use disorder and to submit to body fluid tests twice per month. Any violations connected to the body fluid tests will result in the immediate, temporary suspension of the license. The licensee must also complete courses in nursing law and medication administration including controlled dangerous substance (“CDS”) medications. The licensee will be fined \$1,000 and will be severely reprimanded. Failure to comply with the primary provisions of the order will result in a three month suspension of the license and additional fines. The licensee, while working in a hospital, removed CDS medications on behalf of patients from an automated medication dispensing machine but did not log the use or waste of the medications. The licensee also documented providing CDS medications to patients without prescriptions and providing CDS medications to patients in excess of prescribed amounts. The licensee was terminated from the hospital.

The Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act, 59 O.S.2011 & Supp.2015, §§ 567.1–567.20, authorizes the Board to impose discipline when a nurse “[f]ails to adequately care for patients or to conform to the minimum standards of acceptable nursing” in a way that “unnecessarily exposes a patient or other person to risk of harm,” is “guilty of unprofessional conduct,” is “guilty of any act that jeopardizes a patient’s life, health or safety,” or violates any “state or federal law relating to the practice of . . . nursing,” 59 O.S.Supp.2015, § 567.8(B)(3), (7), (8), (9). Unprofessional conduct includes failing to maintain custody of CDS medications. OAC 485:10-11-1(b)(3)(T). Conduct which jeopardizes a patient’s life, health, and safety includes a nurse’s “[f]ailure to utilize appropriate judgment in administering safe nursing practice.” OAC 485:10-11-1(b)(4)(D). The action seeks to enforce requirements that nurses properly account for CDS medications. The Board may reasonably believe that the action will deter future violations.

It is, therefore, the official opinion of the Attorney General that the Oklahoma Board of Nursing has adequate support for the conclusion that this action advances the State of Oklahoma's policy to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring that nurses meet minimum professional standards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Pruitt", with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

E. SCOTT PRUITT
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA