

**Examples, FAQs, & Additional Guidance for
Kentucky Board of Nursing RN/LPN Scope of Practice Comparison Chart**

Assessment

Q: Can an LPN perform a wound assessment and staging?

A: Yes, wound staging criteria are well established in the literature. Wound assessment may be appropriately performed by LPNs and RNs who have the appropriate educational preparation and clinical competence.

Q: Can an LPN perform an assessment on a patient who has returned to the unit after a procedure?

A: Yes, the LPN can collect data, observe appearance and behavior, and make observations of a patient's subjective and objective signs and symptoms.

The distinction between LPN and RN assessment is that practice and documentation clearly indicate information gathered by the LPN is interpreted and validated by the RN and is then used to formulate a nursing diagnosis and develop a plan of care for the patient. **The LPN is not solely responsible for the patient assessment, independent of the RN.**

The LPN would rely on knowledge, training, and specific criteria to recognize and communicate status or changes in the condition that may require immediate attention by the RN or the qualified healthcare provider.

The collection of assessment data should include:

- Observations of appearance and behavior
- Measurements of physical structure and physiologic function; and
- Observations of a patient's subjective and objective signs and symptoms

The interpretation of assessment data should include:

- Recognizing existing relationships between data gathered and a patient's health status, related to the established plan of care, and the medical treatment regimen.
- Determining a patient's need for nursing interventions based upon data gathered regarding the patient's health status, ability to care for self, and established plan of care and treatment regimen.
- Appropriate consultations based on collected assessment data and patient response to treatments and interventions.

The RN maintains broad accountability for patient assessment for both actual and potential health problems.