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Board of Registration in Nursing  
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February 14, 2018

To: Massachusetts Nursing and Professional Healthcare Organizations  
From: Laurie Talarico, MS, RN, CNP Nursing Practice Coordinator  
Re: New Advisory Ruling 1801: *Licensure Required to Practice Nursing*

At the February 14, 2018 Board of Registration in Nursing (Board) meeting, the Board reviewed Advisory Ruling 1801: *Licensure Required to Practice Nursing* to ensure compliance with current statutes, regulations and scope of practice standards.

The Board has received multiple inquiries from constituents related to individuals practicing nursing in Massachusetts (MA) prior to obtaining a nursing license by exam or by reciprocity. Examples include:

- Unlicensed graduates of nursing education programs employed and working as "intern" or other transition to practice programs employee that allows performance of nursing activities requiring nursing assessment and judgment;
- Working as nursing faculty in MA pre-licensure nursing education programs prior to MA nursing license; and
- Working in a position of nursing administration in a MA facility prior to obtaining a valid MA nursing license.

AR 1801 clarifies that an individual may not accept a paid or voluntary nursing position in MA that requires the performance of nursing activities prior to obtaining a current MA license [Ref: MGL c.112 §§ 65A, 80, 80A].

- A. Based on review of current, relevant statutes and regulations, Board staff voted unanimously to accept AR 1801. Unless an individual possesses a valid current MA nursing license, that individual cannot hold a position:
1. that requires a RN, LPN or APRN title or perform any nursing activity that cannot be delegated, such as:
    - (a) Nursing activities which require nursing assessment and judgment during implementation;

- (b) Physical, psychological, and social assessment which requires nursing judgment, intervention, referral or follow-up;
  - (c) Formulation of the plan of nursing care and evaluation of the patient's/client's response to the care provided;
  - (d) Administration of medications except as permitted by M.G.L. c. 94C.
2. in any school that teaches theoretical or clinical nursing to MA nursing school students; requiring a RN, LPN or APRN title for the position. Students who attend nursing schools without a physical presence in MA who enter MA for any portion of a clinical component must have clinical oversight by faculty who possess a current MA Registered Nurse license in good standing.
  3. in any MA facility as nursing administrator supervising clinical components of nursing care; requiring a RN, LPN or APRN title for the position.
  4. as an advanced practice nursing student participating in the advanced clinical components of coursework when the activities take place within MA settings.
- B. In addition, after receiving Board approval for APRN practice, APRNs must maintain current national certification from a Board approved certifying organization in order to practice in the advanced role.

Please take a moment to review the entire [AR 1801 Licensure Required to Practice Nursing](#)