



**Administration and Management of Intravenous (IV) Moderate Sedation  
in the Emergency Setting**

**POSITION STATEMENT**

The Mississippi Board of Nursing is a consumer protection agency with the authority to regulate the practice of nursing provided for by Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, Title 73, Chapter 15.

A position statement is a scope of practice determination made by the Board, as to whether performance of an action by a licensed nurse is within acceptable standards. Position statements are administrative and educational tools that can be used to assist providers, licensed nurses, and other interested parties in scope of practice determinations. Position statements of the Mississippi Board of Nursing are formulated in response to the Board's legally mandated charge to protect the public through safe nursing practice.

**BACKGROUND**

The Mississippi Board of Nursing has rescinded its prior revisions to the moderate sedation position statement made between 6/20/1991 and 12/2017. Optimal anesthesia care is best provided by qualified anesthesiologists and certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA). However, after further deliberation and consideration, the Nurse Practice Committee acknowledges the demand in the practice setting necessitating that registered nurses that are non-CRNAs provide IV moderate sedation.

Sedation and analgesia describe a medically controlled state of depressed consciousness that allows protective reflexes to be maintained. The patient retains the ability to independently maintain his or her airway and to respond purposefully to verbal commands and/or tactile stimulation. Those patients whose only response is reflex withdrawal from a painful stimulus are sedated to a greater degree than encompassed by sedation/analgesia.

Because it is not always possible to predict how a specific patient will respond to any agent, practitioners intending to produce a given level of sedation should be able to rescue patients whose level of sedation becomes deeper than intended.

According to the "Continuum of Depth of Sedation: Definition of General Anesthesia and Levels of Sedation/Analgesia", approved by the American Society of Anesthesiologists October 13, 1999, and amended on October 27, 2004 and October 23, 2024, the levels of sedation are defined as follows:

- **Minimal sedation (anxiolysis)** is a drug-induced state during which patients respond normally to verbal commands. Although cognitive function and

coordination may be impaired, ventilatory and cardiovascular functions are unaffected.

- **Moderate Sedation/Analgesia (Conscious Sedation)** is a drug-induced depression of consciousness during which patients respond purposefully\* to verbal commands, either alone or accompanied by light tactile stimulation. No interventions are required to maintain a patent airway, and spontaneous ventilation is adequate. Cardiovascular function is usually maintained.
- **Deep Sedation/Analgesia** is a drug-induced depression of consciousness during which patients cannot be easily aroused but respond purposefully\* following repeated or painful stimulations. The ability to independently maintain ventilatory function may be impaired. Patients may require assistance in maintaining a patent airway, and spontaneous ventilations may be inadequate. Cardiovascular function is usually maintained.
- **General Anesthesia** is a drug-induced loss of consciousness during which patients are not arousable, even by painful stimulation. The ability to independently maintain ventilatory function is often impaired. Patients often require assistance in maintaining a patent airway, and positive pressure ventilation may be required because of depressed spontaneous ventilation or drug-induced depression of neuromuscular function. Cardiovascular function may be impaired.
- **Emergency is defined as the threat of the loss of life, limb, or vision.**

\*Reflex withdrawal from a painful stimulus is NOT considered a purposeful response.



## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

12/2017 Amendment to the position statement entitled "Management of Intravenous (IV) Moderate Sedation"

***Emergency is defined as the threat of the loss of life, limb, or vision.***

***It is therefore within the scope of practice of the RN in the emergency setting as defined herein to administer, manage, and monitor sedation in accordance with appropriate education, training, policy, and procedure established by the employing organization"***

The Board does not maintain a listing of specific medications acceptable for administration by registered nurses. When administering any medication, the licensed nurse should be knowledgeable of and comply with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the specific medication, including but not limited to, those of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Mississippi Board of Pharmacy and the Mississippi Board of Nursing. The nurse/facility must determine which medication is appropriate for the nurse to safely administer based on the nurse's education and competence, current standards of practice, and the facility's policies and procedures.

**REFERENCE**

American Society of Anesthesiologists, "Continuum of Depth of Sedation: Definition of General Anesthesia and Levels of Sedation/Analgesia," as amended October 23, 2024.

Reviewed: 04/11/2025

