



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSES

90 MacCorkle Avenue, SW
Suite 203
South Charleston, WV 25303-1443

March 7, 2019

West Virginia University Hospitals, Inc.
Mary Fanning, DNP, RN, FRE, NEA-BC
Director, Nursing Administration
WVU Medicine
1 Medical Center Drive
Morgantown, West Virginia 26505

Dear Dr. Fanning,

The West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses (Board) has received your email in which you request the following:

West Virginia University Hospitals, Inc. seeks guidance and clarification from the Board whether:

1. "Palliative care" at the "end of life" is the only instance in which administration of non-anesthetic doses of ketamine by an appropriately trained nurse is appropriate; or,
2. "Palliative care" also includes the administration of non-anesthetic doses of ketamine by an appropriately trained nurse for the treatment of acute and chronic pain not at the end of life.

The Practice Committee of the Board thoroughly reviewed all information relative to your questions. As you note, "palliative care" is clearly defined in W. Va. Code §16-55-2 as "patient and family centered medical care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing and treating suffering caused by serious illness throughout the continuum of illness, involves addressing physical, emotional social and spiritual needs and facilitates patient autonomy, access to information and choice".

After thoroughly reviewing all available and relevant information, the Board finds the definition of palliative care contained in WV Code §16-55-2 is consistent with the position statement issued by the Board entitled "Administration of Anesthetic Agents", dated June 29, 2018. The position statement states the following, in pertinent part:

3. Ketamine Administration

The administration of Ketamine, as prescribed by a licensed physician as a palliative care intervention for pain management in an acute care setting is within the scope of practice of the RN.

While the position statement, as written, does specifically require the nurse to have "knowledge of end of life care including pain management at the end of life" it does not exclude other areas covered in the definition contained in W. Va. Code §16-55-2. Therefore, the Board finds the following:

1. In accordance with the definition provided in the West Virginia Code, the Board agrees with your following statement:

" . . . the administration of non-anesthetic doses of ketamine by an appropriately trained nurse for the treatment of acute and chronic pain *not at the end of life* is contemplated and permitted by the definition of "palliative care" found at West Virginia Code §16-55-2 . . . "

Thank for the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,



Sue A. Painter, DNP, RN

Executive Director

West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses