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Wound Debridement by Licensed Nurses Guidelines

I. Rationale for Guidelines

The purpose of these *Wound Debridement by Licensed Nurses Guidelines* is to protect the public health and safety by identifying the qualifications and training required for the licensed nurse performing wound debridement. The removal of devitalized tissue is imperative to the improvement of outcomes for patients requiring wound care.

II. Definitions

A. Wound Debridement is defined as the removal of devitalized tissue by one of the following mechanisms:

1. Enzymatic/chemical is the use of topical enzymatic medications for removal of necrotic tissue.
2. Autolytic wound debridement is the breakdown of necrotic tissue provided by the body's own white blood cells. Autolysis can be accomplished with the use of any moisture-retentive dressing.
3. Mechanical wound debridement is the non-selective removal of tissue by wound irrigation, hydrotherapy, or dressings.
4. Sharp - involves the use of scalpel, scissors, or other sharp instruments to remove devitalized tissue;
  - a. Conservative sharp wound debridement is removal of loose avascular tissue without pain or bleeding;
  - b. Aggressive sharp wound debridement is defined as removal of avascular tissue with or without pain or bleeding.

B. Direct supervision means the provision of wound debridement in the physical presence of a Registered Nurse or licensed physician.

III. Qualifications and Training

- A. The scope of practice of the licensed nurse may include performing all types of wound debridement.
- B. The LPN providing sharp debridement must do so under the direct supervision of a registered nurse or licensed physician. (Rationale: Continuous nursing assessment is required during the sharp debridement procedure.)
- C. The licensed nurse performing wound debridement shall be authorized by institutional policy and procedure to provide wound debridement.

- D. The licensed nurse performing sharp debridement:
1. shall evidence competency in wound debridement;
  2. shall have documented training in wound debridement that includes:
    - a. infection control procedures
    - b. types of debridement
    - c. wound etiology and disease processes
    - d. complications (such as unintended uncontrolled bleeding);
    - e. terminology
    - f. pharmacology pertaining to medications utilized in debridement;
  3. demonstrates the acquired knowledge of skin and tissue anatomy and physiology;
  4. ensures that an assessment of the total patient care requirements before and during and after wound debridement has been completed by a Registered Nurse or licensed physician;
  5. recognizes potential complications of wound debridement; and
  6. has the ability to assess and intervene based upon orders or institutional protocols, in the event of complications.

#### IV. Policy and Procedure Requirements

- A. The following information must be available to the licensed nurse in the facility in which the wound debridement occurs:
1. A policy which addresses educational preparation, certification and a competency validation process for wound debridement.
  2. Guidelines for patient monitoring, medication administration and protocols for dealing with potential complications or emergency situations related to wound debridement developed in accordance with accepted standards.
  3. A policy addressing frequency of documentation and monitoring of the patient during and after wound debridement.
- B. Wound debridement must be ordered by any person authorized by state law to so order/prescribe.
- C. Selection and intervention in wound debridement should be consistent with overall patient goals.

#### V. Regulatory Authority

Title 59 O.S. §567.3a.2, 3, 4

#### VI. References

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