

GENERAL MEDICAL 8.0

Public Health Representative/Disease Intervention Specialist Guidelines for Restricted Clinical Functions - 8.7

Date Issued: December 31, 1998

Date Last Revised:

Signature:

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POLICY

The Department of Health expects Public Health Nurses to perform medical functions, as stated in the Law Regulating The Practice of Nursing in Tennessee, including performing male urethral swab cultures, administering and reading tuberculin skin tests, performing venipunctures and issuing TB medications. However, in certain situations (for example, when these functions are provided in the home or community and a nurse is not available), and with the approval of the Regional Health Officer, a Public Health Representative/Disease Intervention Specialist may perform male urethral swab cultures, obtain urine specimens, administer and read tuberculin skin tests, issue packaged and labeled TB and Chlamydia medications in the field, and/or perform venipunctures. These functions may be delegated to the Public Health Representative/Disease Intervention Specialist only if the procedures outlined below are followed.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to state, contract and federal assignee Public Health Representatives/Disease Intervention Specialists (PHR/DIS) who work in Local or Regional Health Departments.

PURPOSE

To protect the health of persons receiving services from health departments.

PROCEDURE

Pursuant to the guidelines set out in this policy, responsibility for the functions identified above may be delegated to the PHR/DIS provided the following criteria are met:

1. The performing of male urethral swab cultures, obtaining urine specimens administering and reading of tuberculin skin tests, issuing of packaged and labeled TB medications in the field, and performing of venipunctures must become a part of the PHR/DIS job plan.
2. The PHR/DIS performing these functions must have documentation in his/her personnel file that he/she has had didactic and hands-on training on the functions. Such documentation must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Health Officer.
3. The training the PHR/DIS receives may be provided in the health department by qualified licensed individuals, in a physician's office or hospital, or through a class outside the health department which has been approved by the Regional Health Officer.
4. Protocols must be established for the PHR/DIS prior to performing these functions. Such protocols must be reviewed and signed annually.
5. A licensed nurse or physician must be included in the supervisory line of review of the PHR/DIS and must periodically perform over the shoulder evaluation of the PHR/DIS performing these functions. Results of these evaluations must be documented in the PHR/DIS personnel file.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

Office of the Medical Director, Bureau of Health Services, (615)741-7305