

DELEGATION OF FUNCTION: PRINCIPLES

THE PHYSICIAN'S ROLE

Medical care consists of evaluation, diagnosis, treatment and education relative to health. An individual must demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skills as well as the ability to use these elements effectively and safely in order to meet the requirements of The Medical Act. There are many acts within the practice of medicine which are, or potentially are, within the competency of another health worker and may be delegated or transferred.

DEFINITIONS

➤ Delegation of Function:

When a physician delegates to another individual any functions which form a part of the practice of medicine, that individual must have the training and qualifications to carry out the duties for which he/she are assigned.

Such persons must remain responsible for these duties to the specific delegating medical practitioner.

➤ Transfer of Function:

Transfer of function is the performance of a medical function by an individual independent of a qualified physician.

Transfer of function can only be considered to a member of a group which is certified as being capable to perform the procedure as a result of education, training and examination.

Transfer of function cannot extend to independent provision of primary care.

PRINCIPLES OF DELEGATION

The following principles apply to delegation of function:

- The physician remains at all times accountable to the patient for the quality of the patient management program. The physician must be aware of what is included in the scope of the delegated function regarding relative liabilities.

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- Other individuals may assume responsibility for performing specific functions within the management program when:
 - the physician has ensured that the individual is appropriately trained to do so;
 - the patient accepts care from the individual to whom delegation has been made;
 - the individual accepts the responsibility and acknowledges the supervisory role of a specific physician.

Also see the Joint Guideline by the College of Physicians of Manitoba and the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, "#132, Shared Competencies and Delegated Physician Services", page 1-G33.

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**A statement is a formal position of the College with
which members shall comply.**