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QUESTION: What is the appropriate policy and procedure for management of resuscitate and do not resuscitate orders ("no code" orders)?

The Board of Nursing for South Carolina acknowledges it is the responsibility of the patient's physician/APRN to initiate any type of resuscitation orders to include do not resuscitate or "no code" orders. In the absence of a written "no code" order, the nurse must initiate CPR or follow related policies and procedures established by the agency.

The Board of Nursing recommends the nursing department develop policies and procedures specific to the nurse's role as related to management of resuscitate and do not resuscitate orders ("no code" orders). In addition, the Board recommends that agencies consult with legal counsel, advance directives documents, accreditation standards (i.e., JCAHO, CHAP), medical staff and the nurse administrator when developing policies and procedures for management of resuscitation orders.

This statement is an advisory opinion of the Board of Nursing as to what constitutes competent and safe nursing practice.