

Medication Administration by Student Nurses: What Are The Regulations?

Occasionally, the Section for Long-Term Care Regulation (SLCR) receives questions from nursing homes related to the ability of new nursing school graduates to pass medications before they pass the board exam and become licensed. If your home helps train new nurses, or plans to hire a new graduate, the following information could help you to comply with the Missouri State Regulations.

A graduate of a nursing program, who has not yet become licensed as a nurse, can pass medications, even if he/she is not a Certified Medication Technician (CMT), with a letter of approval from the Section for Long-Term Care Regulation (SLCR), through the Registry and Review Unit. An unlicensed graduate is not permitted to pass medications without this letter of approval in a licensed long-term care facility, with one exception: If...

...a graduate nurse is already a CMT, he/she can pass medications and does not need a qualifying letter of approval.

It is also important to note that a nurse, who has not passed the board exam and become licensed, may not be the only nurse on-duty in a long-term care facility, even though he or she may be able to pass medications with the SLCR letter of approval.

Enrolled nursing students are not authorized to pass medications in long-term care facilities, even with supervision.

This point is occasionally misunderstood because the Missouri Board of Nursing allows licensed nurses to delegate nursing tasks to nursing students provided they have been adequately trained and they are being supervised. The SLCR has a more restrictive regulation with regard to handling medications, however, and it applies to licensed long-term care facilities rather than licensed health professionals. In licensed long-term care facilities, a student nurse cannot pass medications unless he or she is a CMT.

CMT Challenge

If a nursing student is already a CMT, he or she can clearly pass medications. However, if the student is not already a CMT, and also has not graduated from a nursing program, he or she may be permitted to challenge the CMT exam and pass medications as a CMT without completing the CMT training program. The state regulation addressing this is located at 19 CSR 30-84.020(6)(C)(1).

Challenge means that individuals who meet special criteria are not required to take the entire certified medication technician (CMT) course and will be allowed to take the final examination to become a CMT in Missouri. The individual must successfully pass the written and performance examination.

Individuals eligible to challenge the final exam include:

- Students enrolled in a professional nursing school or in a practical nursing program who have completed a medication administration course and who have a letter of endorsement from the school or program director
- Individuals who successfully completed a professional or practical nursing program but who failed the RN or LPN state licensure examination
- Individuals who provide evidence of successful completion of a state-approved certified medication technician course while working as aides at a facility operated by the Missouri Department of Mental Health
- Individuals who have successfully completed a state-approved medication technician course in another state, who are currently listed as Certified Medication Technicians in good standing

To learn more about these requirements, please visit: <http://health.mo.gov/safety/cnaregistry/cmt.php> or contact the Registry and Review Unit at 573-526-5686.