

LEGAL NURSE CONSULTING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Legal Nurse Consulting Principles and Practices, fourth edition provides foundational knowledge on the specialty nursing practice of legal nurse consulting. Legal nurse consulting is defined, and essential information about the practice is discussed (history, certification, scope and standards of practice, and ethical and liability considerations). The essentials of the law and medical records are explored. Analysis of the various types of legal cases on which legal nurse consultants work is provided, as are other practice areas for legal nurse consultants. The various roles and skills of legal nurse consultants are explored, and the textbook concludes with discussion of the ways in which legal cases are adjudicated.

This volume allows nurses to bridge the gap from their clinical experience to the unfamiliar territory of the legal world, with practical advice on topics including tactics for being cross-examined in the courtroom and investigative and analytical techniques for medical records. Individual chapters by subject-matter experts focus on the full range of legal, medical, and business issues that new or experienced legal nurse consultants and nurse experts will encounter in their work. A nuanced look at the realities and complexities of toxic torts, medical malpractice cases, civil rights in correctional health care, ERISA and HMO litigation, and other practice areas is offered.

Suitable for experienced nurses studying for certification as legal nurse consultants, and for expert witnesses, practitioners seeking to expand their current legal nurse roles, and other health-care and legal practitioners.

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LEGAL NURSE CONSULTING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Fourth Edition

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Founded in 1989, the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) is a not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to the professional enhancement and growth of registered nurses practicing in the specialty of legal nurse consulting and to the advancement of the nursing specialty. The AALNC is the gold standard for professionals with an interest in the legal nurse consulting arena, including novice and veteran legal nurse consultants. The AALNC provides net-working opportunities, educational advancement, and professional development and supports certification through the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB).

Additional information regarding the AALNC, the ALNCCB, and their offerings can be found at:

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The Lead Associate Editors—Debbie Wipf, Beth Zorn, and Karen Huff—have been invaluable, and we are exceptionally grateful for them. They went above and beyond to ensure the quality of the chapters met the high standards set for this textbook. Their guidance, feedback, expertise, and perseverance have been extraordinary, and we cannot thank them enough.

The Associate Editors were instrumental in liaising with the authors, managing the chapters, editing the drafts, and keeping the project moving forward. They shared valuable ideas and suggestions for the project, and we are grateful for their vital contributions.

The peer reviewers were key to ensuring the chapter content was relevant, complete, and up-to-date. Their feedback ensured the textbook provided the necessary information to the readers.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the AALNC Board of Directors for entrusting us with this critical project. They backed our vision for the textbook, provided us with the resources to make it a reality, and encouraged and supported us along the way. Thank you for giving us this opportunity.

There are numerous other individuals who were essential to this project. Samantha Cook from the AALNC headquarters was indispensable. Her organizational skills, logistical support, and patience are unparalleled, and we could not have done this without her. Laura Harshberger, our project manager, provided considerable guidance, feedback, and publication expertise to us and this project. She was instrumental in helping us move the project to publication. We also wish to thank Mariann Cosby and Cheryl White for their significant contributions to this textbook. Their efforts provided the groundwork for this project.

We are also indebted to our families who provided never-ending encouragement, support, and patience throughout this project. Their sacrifices allowed us the freedom and time to see this project through, and we are so blessed and thankful for their love and support.

Lastly, we are grateful to have had the opportunity to serve together as Senior Editors of this textbook. We shared the same vision for this project, and our approach and leadership styles complemented each other perfectly. It was an honor to work together. We are proud to present this textbook to you, as it lays the foundation for the practice of legal nurse consulting.

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Preface

Legal Nurse Consulting: Principles and Practices, fourth edition, provides foundational information on the practice of legal nurse consulting. Legal nurse consultants (LNCs) apply their nursing education, training, and clinical experience to the evaluation of medically related issues in legal cases or claims. The more LNCs learn and understand the legal context in which this evaluation is performed, the more valuable their work products become to their clients and employers.

This textbook offers a general overview of the basic legal concepts and processes common to medical-legal cases, thereby providing a framework for legal nurse consulting practice. While some state-specific examples are used to illustrate these concepts and processes, it is outside the scope of this textbook to delve into the nuances of each state's laws and statutes. Therefore, it is imperative that LNCs gain an understanding of the relevant laws and statutes in the jurisdictions in which they work.

In addition to introducing nurses to these legal fundamentals and the practice of legal nurse consulting, this textbook is also a resource for experienced LNCs who are seeking to fine-tune their skills, expand into other legal nurse consulting practice areas, offer new services to their clients, enhance their value to existing clients or employers, or transition to a different practice setting.

The continuous evolution of legal nurse consultant practice and the legal arena necessitated an updated textbook to address these changes. This fourth edition also features a significant content adjustment and reorganization to allow readers to build their knowledge base as the textbook progresses from the essentials of legal nurse consulting and the law through the adjudication of medical-legal cases. Readers are introduced to the primary practice areas identified in the 2017 Legal Nurse Consultant Practice Analysis conducted by the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB). The analysis of cases in these practice areas is a significant focus of the textbook, and effort was made to ensure the broad applicability of this content regardless of the specifics of the underlying case (e.g., the clinical specialty of the medical malpractice case or the type of accident in the personal injury case).

To achieve an even higher-quality benchmark for this widely used textbook, content experts were utilized during every step of the process. Each chapter was written by an author or authors with extensive expertise and experience in the topic and was carefully vetted by another content expert(s) through a double-blind peer review process.

It is because of this consideration and attention to the thoroughness and quality of the content that this textbook is used by the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) and other providers of LNC education as the core for curriculum development. It is also used by the ALNCCB and its volunteers as a resource in developing questions for the Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC®) examination. As such, *Legal Nurse Consulting: Principles and Practices* is recognized as the pre-eminent resource on the practice of legal nurse consulting.

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