

Mandatory Phlebotomy Regulation Establishing Scope of Practice

Sunrise Application

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Mandatory Phlebotomy Licensing/Certification

This Sunrise Application is not just a proposal but a call to action. It aims to establish MANDATORY PHLEBOTOMY Regulation Licensing/Certification in Arizona's healthcare system, a crucial step in ensuring the safety and accuracy of patient care. The urgency of this call is underscored by the fact that an estimated 70% of patient diagnoses rely on blood testing. However, there is no regulated scope of practice or standards in phlebotomy in Arizona, leaving room for potential risks to patient safety and accurate diagnosis.

Establishing the state-wide scope of practice and standards for Phlebotomy is of utmost importance. These guidelines are not just important; they are critical during phlebotomy procedures to protect the integrity of the specimen and the safety of both healthcare workers and patients. A blood sample provides valuable insights into the body's condition, and the accuracy of the sample collection is vital. Phlebotomy has no regulated standards, and practices vary among healthcare personnel. Despite the low perceived risk, an estimated 70% of patient diagnoses rely on blood testing. In Arizona, most individuals who draw blood are not even certified in phlebotomy, as it is not a requirement in the state. Twelve states have some form of personnel licensure or mandatory certification for clinical laboratory personnel. In most states, phlebotomy licensing or certification is not obligatory. However, these states rely on the federal

CLIA program to uphold testing quality, encompassing minimum personnel qualifications (GorillaHost, 2024). Establishing mandatory Phlebotomy Licensing/Certification is not just a suggestion but a necessity. It is crucial to ensure the most accurate blood specimen results by requiring all Phlebotomists to obtain standardized certification, provide existing professional Phlebotomists with the most up-to-date standards and protocols, and implement new research data in the ongoing professional career field of Phlebotomy.

Phlebotomy Licensing/Certification: Purpose and Scope

Phlebotomy, a vital component of healthcare procedures, involves the adept collection of blood samples. Before any surgical interventions or medical treatments, it is essential to conduct comprehensive blood testing. Venipuncture, the method of obtaining blood samples by inserting a sterile needle into a vein, is crucial in monitoring human blood levels. The blood collection technique can significantly impact test results' accuracy. Inadequate training and adherence to proper specimen collection protocols may result in misdiagnosis (Waheed et al., 2013). Hence, formal education in phlebotomy is essential and indispensable to patient care.

Phlebotomy licensing requires completing a 200-hour course comprising 120 hours of classroom lectures and hands-on training, conducting 100 blood draws, and completing an 80-hour externship. This certification, granted by a nationally certified class instructor, remains

valid for two years. Phlebotomists must renew their certification every two years to stay current with certification and licensing requirements and to learn the most accurate, up-to-date information available in phlebotomy. They must undergo proper training from an accredited phlebotomy institution to enhance their knowledge and skills (Waheed et al., 2013). Other medical professionals involved in blood drawing, such as medical assistants, nurses, and research lab professionals, must undergo phlebotomy protocol certification. This includes comprehensive knowledge of the "order of draw" for different types of blood collection tubes, as well as a thorough understanding of contamination prevention and safety measures to ensure the integrity of the blood samples and the well-being of the patients. This certification is crucial to maintaining high standards of patient care and accurate testing in medical settings.

Up-to-date Standards and Protocols

The field of phlebotomy continuously explores new standards and protocols to enhance safety measures for patients and healthcare providers during phlebotomy procedures (Medical Laboratory Observer, 2023). This ongoing research reflects the medical field's commitment to continual improvement for the betterment of society. Notably, the phlebotomy procedure represents the critical pre-analytical phase of specimen collection, with the protection of specimen integrity being paramount to ensuring accurate results. This process commences upon a phlebotomist receiving the doctor's signed requisition for the blood test. Before and after the blood draw, the phlebotomist must verify and legibly record five identifiers on the label: the

patient's name, date of birth, date of the draw, time of the drawing, and the phlebotomist's name or initials. Emphasizing that proper phlebotomy practices are fundamental for accurate diagnosis and treatment, it is evident that they also underpin patient and phlebotomist safety. Knowledge dissemination to all facilities providing blood drawing services is essential, with a corresponding requirement for phlebotomists to undergo re-certification every two years to ensure the provision of up-to-date information.

Implementing New Research Data

As research data emerges, it is imperative to implement it effectively. The absence of certification requirements in many regions has yet to disseminate crucial new findings regarding phlebotomy procedures to blood-drawing personnel. For instance, a common practice among blood collection professionals involves instructing the patient to make a fist or squeeze a ball, inadvertently leading to elevated potassium levels within the blood. This, in turn, can yield misleading readings for the attending physician (Burl et al., 1990), potentially impacting the prescribed course of medication. The dissemination of information regarding numerous blood collection errors, which can significantly influence specimen integrity, is paramount to all blood-drawing personnel. Furthermore, attention is required regarding safety procedures, encompassing both patient and healthcare provider welfare. Mitigating the risks associated with errors necessitates the adoption of standardized practices (Medical Laboratory Observer, 2023). Consequently, it is imperative to strictly adhere to safety protocols in all facilities where blood is

drawn. Continuous professional development among phlebotomists can diminish errors, prevent injury to patients and healthcare providers, and enhance the safety standards associated with blood sample collection.

Conclusion

It is crucial to clearly outline the scope of practice for phlebotomists and other medical professionals involved in drawing blood. One important measure to ensure accurate and reliable blood specimen results is to mandate that these professionals obtain phlebotomy licensing or certification. This requirement is vital in establishing and upholding specific guidelines for collecting and handling blood samples. It is imperative to ensure that all phlebotomists in Arizona undergo standardized certification or licensing to maintain high standards of practice.

In addition to the initial certification, it is recommended that phlebotomists renew their certification every two years. This renewal process is essential to keeping them updated with the latest industry standards and protocols and ensuring continued adherence to best practices. By implementing these stringent measures, we can uphold and elevate the standards of practice and guarantee the quality of blood specimen results in Arizona. The significance and urgency of this proposal cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the reliability and accuracy of medical testing and diagnosis.

Let us join in empowering Arizona to spearhead a groundbreaking movement that will revolutionize the field of phlebotomy. Let us ignite widespread awareness about the crucial significance of blood draws in healthcare. By championing this cause, we can drive transformative change and set a compelling example for the rest of the country. Let us unite and lead the charge in propelling this revolutionary movement in Arizona and beyond!

Resources

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