



NORTH CAROLINA RESPIRATORY CARE BOARD

1100 Navaho Drive, Suite 242
Raleigh, NC 27609

October 7, 2004

Mark Trujillo, RCP
Cardiopulmonary Department
Franklin Regional Medical Center
100 Hospital Drive
PO Box 609
Louisburg, NC 27549

Dear Mr. Trujillo,

This letter is sent on behalf of the North Carolina Respiratory Care Board in reference to your email of August 23, 2004 requesting interpretation as to whether a Respiratory Care Practitioner (RCP) may administer Ambien to sleep lab patients. Your email also asks if RCP's may administer other narcotics.

The Respiratory Care Board discussed your request during its regular scheduled meeting held on October 7, 2004 and approved the following interpretation of the Respiratory Care Practice act and Board rules concerning your request:

The Board has already determined that a RCP may administer certain sedatives and narcotics under certain conditions in its declaratory ruling on conscious sedation dated January 2, 2004. This ruling may be downloaded from the Board website at http://www.ncrcb.org/Declaratory_Rulings.html.

In reference to the administration of Ambien to sleep study patients, the Board has determined RCP's may administer Ambien to sleep study patients as long as he or she has documented training and annual documented competency reviews in the administration of Ambien to sleep study patients. The facility or program where this procedure is performed must maintain policies and guidelines for performing the procedure, as it would for any procedures provided by the RCP's that it employs. The RCP's administering Ambien must also have documented approval from the hospital pharmacy and nursing departments.

The Board has also determined that the administration of Ambien to sleep study patients may depress breathing and may cloud the sleep study results and therefore the Board discourages the use of Ambien in the sleep lab. This interpretation only covers the administration of Ambien by licensed RCP's.

Please advise if you have any other questions about this issue.

Regards,

Floyd E. Boyer, RRT, RCP
Executive Director