

Analyzing Pacemaker Leads: Application of a Form of Energy

By Mariane Menard, RN, and Judi Tyndall, RN, BScN

The Hamilton General Hospital, one of the four campuses of the Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, is the pacemaker centre for South Central Ontario. Approximately 300 pacemakers are inserted annually. The majority of the pacemaker analyzing is done by the pacemaker clinician, Mariane Menard. In the past, the Operating Room nurse would, at times, do the analyzing.

The scope of practice model of the Regulated Health Professions Act of Ontario identifies what regulated health professionals can do. The model has two parts. **Part 1** is a statement of what the profession does, including the method it uses and its goals, while **Part 2** is a list of 13 controlled acts. These acts are considered to be potentially harmful if performed by unqualified persons. The controlled acts are authorized in varying degrees to professions, based on the nature of their practice. Nurses are authorized to perform procedures that are within three controlled acts. (see Appendix 1)

Analyzing of pacemaker leads, which is "an application of a form of energy," was designated beyond the scope of practice for nursing. Analyzing

of pacemaker leads is now a Delegated Controlled Act. In order for a RN to perform a delegated controlled act, the nurse must be certified to do the particular delegated controlled act.

Certification Process

The certification process includes:

1. A designated physician approves the learning package used for certification and certifies the point nurse that oversees the certifying of other nurses.
2. The designated physician may also certify the nurses.
 - a) The nurses must be re-certified annually.

At the Hamilton General Campus Operating Room, we asked for Registered Nurse volunteers who would be interested in being certified. In determining the number of nurses we required, we reviewed our annual pacemaker volumes and calculated the number of cases that each nurse would have to be assisting with in order to maintain their competency.

Mariane Menard and Dr. C. Lefevre, cardiologist at HHSC developed AN education plan, which included:

- a) ECG interpretation -16 hours of educational classes followed by a written test.

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Mariane Menard is the Pacemaker Nurse Clinician; and Judi Tyndall is a Nurse Educator for the Surgical Program, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, Hamilton, Ontario.

b) Pacing Class - 8 hours of educational classes (includes the intervention/treatment for malfunctioning pacemakers) followed by a written test.

Following the classes, each nurse did a clinical component, which included a preceptorship program with Mariane Menard for:

1. Fifteen (15) Single Ventricular Chamber pacemaker insertions
2. Twenty (20) Dual Chamber pacemaker insertions

Dr.C. Lefevre certified the nurses on both the Single and Dual Chamber insertions .

The Recertification of the Nurses

Will Include:

1. An ECG test
2. A pacing test
3. Case review and testing of five cases.

To-date, three RNs have successfully completed their certification and our goal is to have six RNs certified to analyze pacemaker leads.

To increase the confidence and expand the knowledge of the certified nurses, these nurses will spend time in the pacemaker clinic interviewing the patients post-op. These nurses will also be encouraged to attend patient rounds in the Cardiac Care Unit.

The introduction of this delegated controlled act has not only allowed us to follow the College of Nurses of Ontario Standards regarding the RHPA, but has also ensured that the nurse analyzing the pacemaker leads is qualified to do so. ■

Bibliography

College of Nurses of Ontario "Controlled Acts Regulation Now in Effect", April 1996.

Appendix 1

Scope of Practice Statement for Nursing

The practice of nursing is the promotion of health and the assessment of, the provision of care for, and the treatment of health conditions by supportive, preventive, therapeutic, palliative and rehabilitative means in order to attain or maintain optimal function.

The three controlled acts authorized to nursing are:

1. Performing a prescribed procedure below the dermis or a mucous membrane.
2. Administering a substance by injection or inhalation.
3. Putting an instrument, hand, or finger:
 - i) beyond the external ear canal
 - ii) beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow
 - iii) beyond the larynx
 - iv) beyond the opening of the urethra
 - v) beyond the labia majora
 - vi) beyond the anal verge, or
 - viii) into an artificial opening into the body.

Abstract:

In the province of Ontario, analyzing of pacemaker leads is a delegated controlled act. This article describes the certification/recertification process for analyzing of pacemaker leads at the Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation.