

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1414

C 43 L 09
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning health care assistants.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Driscoll, Moeller, Hinkle, Cody, Sullivan, Nelson and Ormsby).

House Committee on Health Care & Wellness
House Committee on Health & Human Services Appropriations
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

Health care assistants are certified persons who assist licensed health care practitioners, such as physicians and physician assistants, registered nurses and advanced registered nurse practitioners, and naturopaths. A licensed health care practitioner may delegate certain functions within the delegator's scope of practice to a health care assistant, including administering skin tests and injections, and performing blood withdrawal and certain other specified functions.

Health care assistants are certified by the health care facility in which the services are performed or by the health care practitioner who delegates functions to the health care assistant. The facility or practitioner must submit to the Department of Health a roster of certified health care assistants. The submittal must include a list of specific medications and diagnostic agents, and the route of administration of each.

Summary:

Authority of Health Care Assistants.

Qualified health care assistants are granted limited authority to administer certain additional drugs. The administration of these drugs by a health care assistant is restricted to oral, topical, rectal, otic, ophthalmic, or inhaled routes administered pursuant to a written order of a supervising health care practitioner.

A health care practitioner, rather than a health care assistant, must administer a medication if:

- a patient is unable to physically ingest or safely apply a medication independently or with assistance; or

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- a patient is unable to indicate an awareness that he or she is taking a medication.

Drugs Acceptable for Administration.

Health care assistants may be authorized to administer only the following drugs while a patient is in the care of a health care practitioner:

- over-the-counter drugs: Benadryl, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, aspirin, Neosporin, polysporin, normal saline, colace, kenalog, and hydrocortisone cream; and
- nonover-the-counter unit dose legend drugs: kenalog, hydrocortisone cream, raglan, compazine, zofran, bactroban, albuterol, xopenex, silvadene, gastrointestinal cocktail, fluoride, lmx cream, emla, lat, optic dyes, oral contrast, and oxygen.

Competency Requirements.

Health care assistants authorized to administer the specified over-the-counter and legend drugs must demonstrate initial and ongoing competency to administer specific drugs as determined by the health care practitioner.

Expiration of Operative Provisions.

The operative provisions that provide health care assistants the limited authority to administer certain drugs expire on July 1, 2013.

Sunrise Review.

The Department of Health must conduct a review regarding the regulation and the scope of the practice of medical assistants.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| House | 97 | 0 |
| Senate | 48 | 0 |

Effective: July 26, 2009