

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1535

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### As Reported By House Committee On:

Health Care

**Title:** An act relating to naturopathic health care practitioners.

**Brief Description:** Declaring a naturopath a health care practitioner for certain purposes.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Sherstad, Cody, Dyer, Murray, Cooke, O'Brien, Cooper, Wolfe, Cole, Veloria, Butler, Ogden, Anderson, Mason and Van Luven.

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/21/97 [DPS].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Murray, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Conway; Sherstad; Wood and Zellinsky.

**Staff:** John Welsh (786-7133).

**Background:** Health care assistants are individuals who assist health care practitioners and health facilities specified in law for providing health services to patients. Physicians, osteopathic physicians, podiatrists, nurses and advanced registered nurse practitioners, as well as hospitals and nursing homes, may certify to the Department of Health the use of individuals as health care assistants.

Health care assistants are registered with the department for inclusion under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Health care assistants may administer injections when supervised by a health care practitioner who is physically present and immediately available.

Practitioners of naturopathic medicine or naturopathy are not authorized by law to certify and use health care assistants. The practice of naturopathy includes the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the body by stimulating the natural processes

of the body. Naturopaths may administer injections for immunization, blood withdrawal, and vitamin B-12 deficiency.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Licensed naturopaths are included among the health care practitioners who may certify an individual for use as a health care assistant.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** A technical change moved the reference to naturopaths to the appropriate subsection.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The practice of naturopathy is becoming more complex. Naturopaths need to delegate some of their nondiscretionary procedures to their trained assistants.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Donna Datsko, Bastyr University.