

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2465

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Health Care

**Title:** An act relating to health care providers' communication with patients.

**Brief Description:** Expanding the privileged communication from physician-patient to the health care provider and patient privilege.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Dyer, Cody, Backlund, L. Thomas and Cooke.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care: 1/29/98 [DP].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Murray, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Conway; Parlette; Sherstad; Wood and Zellinsky.

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

**Background:** Under current law, a physician or osteopathic physician generally enjoys the physician-patient privilege whereby the physician may not be compelled in a civil action before a court of law to disclose information acquired from a patient which was necessary in treating the patient.

This right of privileged or confidential communication however does not extend to other health providers under state law.

**Summary of Bill:** The right of privileged or confidential communication is extended to every health care provider regulated by the Department of Health, including a home health, hospice, and home care agency, and any other health care provider lawfully practicing in this state, and their employees and agents, and they may not be compelled to disclose in a civil action information acquired from a patient which was necessary to treat a patient.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** All health providers should have the right of confidential communications with their patients protected. It encourages the patient to fully relate their problems without fear of exposure.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Melanie Stewart, Washington State Podiatric Medicine Association (pro).