

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2510

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 24, 2000

Title: An act relating to in-home services.

Brief Description: Modifying home health, home care, hospice, and in-home services.

Sponsors: Representatives Edmonds, D. Schmidt, Hurst and Kenney; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/16/2000, 2/24/2000 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Deccio, Franklin, Johnson and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Currently the Department of Health (DOH) issues three separate licenses for home health, hospice, and home care services under one chapter. These licenses require separate applications, surveys, renewal processes, and other administrative procedures.

Many of these agencies, however, provide two or more service categories which are separately licensed. Some regulation is redundant, and as in-home services have broadened, current regulatory language has not been updated to reflect changes in the industry.

Summary of Amended Bill: Three license categories for home health, home care, and hospice agencies are combined into one in-home services agency– license. Several exemptions to this license are added to existing exemptions, including individuals who provide care through a direct agreement with the recipient at home, public health departments, case managers, and volunteers.

The department must adopt rules addressing specific in-home delivery of care polices. Additions to the current home care bill of rights include the right to complain without retaliation and full disclosure about the agency’s responsibilities regarding advance directives.

An explicit list of reasons the department may take enforcement action against a licensee are included. The department is given authority to take new enforcement actions against any entity engaging in the unlicensed operation of an in-home services agency.

A new type of hospice category, hospice care center, is established. These centers require a certificate of need (CON). Some exemptions to the CON requirement are stated.

Individual providers and home care agency providers must complete orientation, basic training and continuing education. Training and education for home care providers should attempt innovative approaches. Materials used for training purposes and developed by the department are in the public domain. Training materials used by the department under contract with private entities are subject to copyright restrictions.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: All language related to training and documents being in the public domain was added.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2000.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2002.

Testimony For: Streamlining the licensure of in-home care agencies will create efficiencies at DOH and allow the industry to work better.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Gary Bennett, Dept. of Health (pro); Gail McGaffick, WA State Hospice, Home Care Assn. of WA (pro).