
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

HB 2204

Brief Description: Modifying the nursing home certificate of bed need ratio.

Sponsors: Representatives Morrell, Cody and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a nursing home bed to population ratio of 40 beds per 1000 persons age 70 and over.

Hearing Date: 2/22/07

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

In November 1996, the definition of nursing home bed established ratio was first implemented in statute. At that time it meant a bed-to-population ratio of 45 beds per 1000 persons age 65 and older. The legislature changed the definition on July 1, 1999 to mean a bed-to-population ratio of 40 beds per 1000 persons age 65 and older. The definition has not been reviewed or changed since 1999. This section of the statute expired on June 30, 2004, and the established ratio of 40 beds per 1000 age 65 and older was adopted in rule.

In June of this year, 74.57 percent of nursing home residents were age 70 or older, and 66.04 percent were age 75 or older. Over one-third of the residents were age 85 or older. The average age for all nursing home residents was 79.97 years.

There continue to be vacant beds available in nursing homes in the State of Washington. Based on 2005 cost reports, the average occupancy for nursing homes was 86.5 percent, meaning that on any day, 13.5 out of every 100 nursing home beds are vacant.

Washington State established the policy direction for our long term care system in chapter 74.39A RCW. When this legislation was enacted in 1993, the legislature stated that the public interest

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would best be served by a broad array of long-term care services that support persons who need such services at home or in the community whenever practicable. In passing this legislation, the legislature stated its expectations that as other long-term care options become more available, the relative need for nursing home beds is likely to decline. The legislature further expressed its intent as follows:

- (1) Long-term care services administered by the Department of Social and Health services include a balanced array of health, social, and supportive services that promote individual choice, dignity, and the highest practicable level of independence;
- (2) Home and community-based services be developed, expanded, or maintained in order to meet the needs of consumers and to maximize effective use of limited resources;
- (3) Long-term care services be responsive and appropriate to individual need and also cost-effective for the state;
- (4) Nursing home care is provided in such a manner and in such an environment as will promote maintenance or enhancement of the quality of life of each resident and timely discharge to a less restrictive care setting when appropriate; and
- (5) State health planning for nursing home bed supply take into account increased availability of other home and community-based service options." (RCW 74.39A.007)

Summary of Bill:

In determining the need for nursing home beds the Department of Health will use a nursing home bed to population ratio of forty beds per 1000 persons age 70 and over.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.