
HOUSE BILL 2667

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By Representatives Morrell, McCoy, Green, Hunt, Wallace, Cody,
Pedersen, and Kenney

Read first time 01/15/08. Referred to Committee on Health Care &
Wellness.

1 AN ACT Relating to delegation of nursing tasks to care for persons
2 with diabetes; amending RCW 18.79.260 and 18.88A.210; and creating a
3 new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Washington
6 state has developed a strong community-based long-term care system in
7 an effort to honor the desire of elderly persons and persons with
8 disabilities to live in their own home or other home-like settings and
9 to provide long-term care services in a cost-effective manner. The
10 legislature further finds that more than fifteen percent of adults over
11 age sixty-five in Washington state have diabetes. Current nurse
12 delegation statutes limit the ability of elderly and disabled persons
13 with diabetes to remain in their own homes or in other home-like long-
14 term care settings.

15 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to modify nurse delegation
16 statutes to the extent needed to enable elderly persons and persons
17 with disabilities who have diabetes to continue to reside in their own
18 home or other home-like settings. While blood glucose testing is

1 already a task that can be delegated, the legislature intends to
2 authorize nurse delegation of administration of insulin injections as
3 provided in this act.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.79.260 and 2003 c 140 s 2 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) A registered nurse under his or her license may perform for
7 compensation nursing care, as that term is usually understood, to
8 individuals with illnesses, injuries, or disabilities.

9 (2) A registered nurse may, at or under the general direction of a
10 licensed physician and surgeon, dentist, osteopathic physician and
11 surgeon, naturopathic physician, podiatric physician and surgeon,
12 physician assistant, osteopathic physician assistant, or advanced
13 registered nurse practitioner acting within the scope of his or her
14 license, administer medications, treatments, tests, and inoculations,
15 whether or not the severing or penetrating of tissues is involved and
16 whether or not a degree of independent judgment and skill is required.
17 Such direction must be for acts which are within the scope of
18 registered nursing practice.

19 (3) A registered nurse may delegate tasks of nursing care to other
20 individuals where the registered nurse determines that it is in the
21 best interest of the patient.

22 (a) The delegating nurse shall:

23 (i) Determine the competency of the individual to perform the
24 tasks;

25 (ii) Evaluate the appropriateness of the delegation;

26 (iii) Supervise the actions of the person performing the delegated
27 task; and

28 (iv) Delegate only those tasks that are within the registered
29 nurse's scope of practice.

30 (b) A registered nurse, working for a home health or hospice agency
31 regulated under chapter 70.127 RCW, may delegate the application,
32 instillation, or insertion of medications to a registered or certified
33 nursing assistant under a plan of care.

34 (c) Except as authorized in (b) or (e) of this subsection, a
35 registered nurse may not delegate the administration of medications.
36 Except as authorized in (e) of this subsection, a registered nurse may

1 not delegate acts requiring substantial skill, and may not delegate
2 piercing or severing of tissues. Acts that require nursing judgment
3 shall not be delegated.

4 (d) No person may coerce a nurse into compromising patient safety
5 by requiring the nurse to delegate if the nurse determines that it is
6 inappropriate to do so. Nurses shall not be subject to any employer
7 reprisal or disciplinary action by the nursing care quality assurance
8 commission for refusing to delegate tasks or refusing to provide the
9 required training for delegation if the nurse determines delegation may
10 compromise patient safety.

11 (e) For delegation in community-based care settings or in-home care
12 settings, a registered nurse may delegate nursing care tasks only to
13 registered or certified nursing assistants. Simple care tasks such as
14 blood pressure monitoring, personal care service, diabetic insulin
15 device set up, verbal verification of insulin dosage for sight-impaired
16 individuals, or other tasks as defined by the nursing care quality
17 assurance commission are exempted from this requirement.

18 (i) "Community-based care settings" includes: Community
19 residential programs for (~~the developmentally disabled~~) people with
20 developmental disabilities, certified by the department of social and
21 health services under chapter 71A.12 RCW; adult family homes licensed
22 under chapter 70.128 RCW; and boarding homes licensed under chapter
23 18.20 RCW. Community-based care settings do not include acute care or
24 skilled nursing facilities.

25 (ii) "In-home care settings" include an individual's place of
26 temporary or permanent residence, but does not include acute care or
27 skilled nursing facilities, and does not include community-based care
28 settings as defined in (e)(i) of this subsection.

29 (iii) Delegation of nursing care tasks in community-based care
30 settings and in-home care settings is only allowed for individuals who
31 have a stable and predictable condition. "Stable and predictable
32 condition" means a situation in which the individual's clinical and
33 behavioral status is known and does not require the frequent presence
34 and evaluation of a registered nurse.

35 (iv) The determination of the appropriateness of delegation of a
36 nursing task is at the discretion of the registered nurse. (~~However~~)
37 Other than delegation of the administration of insulin by injection for

1 the purpose of caring for individuals with diabetes, the administration
2 of medications by injection, sterile procedures, and central line
3 maintenance may never be delegated.

4 (v) When delegating insulin injections under this subsection
5 (3)(e), the registered nurse delegator must instruct the individual
6 regarding proper injection procedures and the use of insulin,
7 demonstrate proper injection procedures, and supervise and evaluate the
8 individual performing the delegated task weekly during the first four
9 weeks of delegation of insulin injections. If the registered nurse
10 delegator determines that the individual is competent to perform the
11 injection properly and safely, supervision and evaluation shall occur
12 at least every ninety days thereafter.

13 (vi) The registered nurse shall verify that the nursing assistant
14 has completed the required core nurse delegation training required in
15 chapter 18.88A RCW prior to authorizing delegation.

16 (~~(vi)~~) (vii) The nurse is accountable for his or her own
17 individual actions in the delegation process. Nurses acting within the
18 protocols of their delegation authority are immune from liability for
19 any action performed in the course of their delegation duties.

20 (~~(vii)~~) (viii) Nursing task delegation protocols are not intended
21 to regulate the settings in which delegation may occur, but are
22 intended to ensure that nursing care services have a consistent
23 standard of practice upon which the public and the profession may rely,
24 and to safeguard the authority of the nurse to make independent
25 professional decisions regarding the delegation of a task.

26 (f) The nursing care quality assurance commission may adopt rules
27 to implement this section.

28 (4) Only a person licensed as a registered nurse may instruct
29 nurses in technical subjects pertaining to nursing.

30 (5) Only a person licensed as a registered nurse may hold herself
31 or himself out to the public or designate herself or himself as a
32 registered nurse.

33 **Sec. 3.** RCW 18.88A.210 and 2003 c 140 s 5 are each amended to read
34 as follows:

35 (1) A nursing assistant meeting the requirements of this section
36 who provides care to individuals in community-based care settings or

1 in-home care settings, as defined in RCW 18.79.260(3), may accept
2 delegation of nursing care tasks by a registered nurse as provided in
3 RCW 18.79.260(3).

4 (2) For the purposes of this section, "nursing assistant" means a
5 nursing assistant-registered or a nursing assistant-certified. Nothing
6 in this section may be construed to affect the authority of nurses to
7 delegate nursing tasks to other persons, including licensed practical
8 nurses, as authorized by law.

9 (3)(a) Before commencing any specific nursing care tasks authorized
10 under this chapter, the nursing assistant must ~~((+a))~~ (i) provide to
11 the delegating nurse a certificate of completion issued by the
12 department of social and health services indicating the completion of
13 basic core nurse delegation training, ~~((+b))~~ (ii) be regulated by the
14 department of health pursuant to this chapter, subject to the uniform
15 disciplinary act under chapter 18.130 RCW, and ~~((+e))~~ (iii) meet any
16 additional training requirements identified by the nursing care quality
17 assurance commission. Exceptions to these training requirements must
18 adhere to RCW 18.79.260(3)(e)~~((+v))~~ (vi).

19 (b) In addition to meeting the requirements of (a) of this
20 subsection, before commencing the care of individuals with diabetes
21 that involves administration of insulin by injection, the nursing
22 assistant must provide to the delegating nurse a certificate of
23 completion issued by the department of social and health services
24 indicating completion of specialized diabetes nurse delegation
25 training. The training must include, but is not limited to,
26 instruction regarding diabetes, insulin, and proper injection
27 procedures.

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