
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1628

Brief Description: Allowing nurses and physicians to satisfy a portion of their continuing education credits through providing services to medicaid enrollees or the uninsured.

Sponsors: Representatives Habib, Scott, Green, Appleton, Tarleton, Carlyle, Springer, Hunter, Bergquist, Ormsby, Morris, Tharinger, Rodne, Kirby, Vick, Ryu, Santos, Riccelli, Fitzgibbon, Sells, Kochmar, Farrell, Angel, Cody, Lias, Reykdal, Clibborn, Zeiger, Fey, Goodman, Moscoso, Upthegrove, Lytton, Jinkins, Kagi, Smith, Maxwell, Pollet, Morrell and Freeman.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires rules be adopted to allow nurses and doctors to satisfy up to 25 percent of their continuing education credits by providing medical services to Medicaid recipients or the uninsured. |
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Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: Cherlyn Walden (786-7296).

Background:

Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission.

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) is a 15 member, Governor-appointed board that regulates the competency and quality of licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, advanced registered nurse practitioners, and nursing technicians. The NCQAC establishes, monitors, and enforces licensing for nurses; approves curricula and establishes criteria for nursing schools; and ensures consistent standards of practice.

Nurse Continuing Education.

In order to renew an active license, registered nurses and practical nurses licensed in Washington are required to demonstrate the ongoing ability to maintain, update, and demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills, judgment, and qualifications necessary to practice safely and ethically in accordance with the scope of nursing practice, every three years. A nurse achieves continuing

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competency through active practice, self-assessment and reflection, and continuing nursing education.

Continuing nursing education hours may be obtained through mentorship, certification, presentations, and specialty certifications. The education hours should relate to the nurse's area of professional practice or areas identified through self-assessment and reflection for professional growth and development. Nurses are required to complete a minimum of 45 hours of continuing nursing education every three years in order to renew their licenses.

Medical Quality Assurance Commission.

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) is responsible for assuring quality healthcare is provided by physicians and physician assistants. The MQAC establishes, monitors, and enforces qualifications for licensure, consistent standards of practice, and continuing competency.

The MQAC is composed of 21 Governor-appointed members and pro-tem members appointed by the Department of Health Secretary.

Physician Continuing Education.

Physicians are required to renew their licenses every two years on or before their birthday. Licensed physicians must complete 200 hours of continuing education every four years. In lieu of the 200 hours of continuing medical education, a physician may provide a Physician's Recognition Award from the American Medical Association or a current certificate from any specialty board approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Alternatively, a physician may provide a certification or recertification by a specialty board as the equivalent of 200 hours of continuing medical education, but certification or recertification must be obtained in the four years preceding application for renewal.

The following are categories of creditable continuing medical education activities approved by the MQAC:

| Category | Number of credit hours permitted |
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| I: Continuing medical education activities with accredited sponsorship | 200 |
| II: Continuing medical education activities with non-accredited sponsorship | 80 |
| III: Teaching of physicians or other allied health professionals | 80 |
| IV: Books, papers, publications, exhibits | 80 |
| V: Self-directed activities: self-assessment, self-instruction, specialty board examination preparation, quality of care and/or utilization review | 80 |

Summary of Bill:

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission must adopt rules to allow nurses renewing their licenses to satisfy up to 25 percent of their continuing education credits by providing

medical services to people enrolled in Medicaid or, at no cost, to people who are uninsured. One hour of providing direct care to patients is the equivalent of one continuing education credit.

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission must adopt rules to allow physicians renewing their licenses to satisfy up to 25 percent of their continuing education credits by providing medical services to people enrolled in Medicaid or, at no cost, to people who are uninsured. One hour of providing direct care to patients is the equivalent of one continuing education credit.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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