

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5460

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Allowing practitioners to prescribe and distribute prepackaged emergency medications to emergency room patients when a pharmacy is not available.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Parlette, Cleveland, Rivers, Keiser, Angel, Chase and Bailey).

**Senate Committee on Health Care**  
**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**Background:** Community pharmacies dispense prescription drugs and other over-the-counter medications under the direction of a registered pharmacist. In many rural areas, community pharmacies are the only source for prescription drugs and discussion of health-related concerns.

Hospital pharmacies can usually be found within the premises of a hospital. Hospital pharmacies usually stock a larger range of medications, including more specialized and investigational medications, than would be feasible in the community setting. Hospital pharmacies typically provide medications for the hospitalized patients only, and are not retail establishments. Some hospitals do have retail pharmacies within them, which sell over-the-counter as well as prescription medications to the public.

**Summary:** Emergency medication is defined as medication commonly prescribed to emergency room patients, including controlled substances listed in schedules II through V.

Hospitals may allow health care practitioners with prescriptive authority to prescribe, and both health care practitioners and registered nurses to distribute, prepackaged emergency medications to patients being discharged from a hospital emergency department if community or hospital pharmacies are not available within 15 miles by road or if the patient has no reasonable ability to reach the community or outpatient pharmacy. In order to prescribe and distribute prepackaged emergency medications, hospitals must develop policies and procedures on the following: development of a list of the types of emergency medications to be prepackaged and distributed; requiring that emergency medications be prepackaged by a pharmacist; development of the specific criteria under which emergency prepackaged medications may be prescribed and distributed; ensuring that the practitioner who is prescribing the emergency medication is trained on the prepackaged medication available and when they may be dispensed; recordkeeping requirements; permitting only a

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48–96 hour supply of emergency medication to be dispensed; providing that the prepackaged emergency medications are stored in the emergency room; and ensuring patient counseling on the medicine before distribution.

Hospital pharmacies may engage in intra-company sales, such as sales between divisions, subsidiaries and affiliated or related companies. They may also sell prescription drugs for emergency purposes such as to alleviate a temporary shortage.

Hospitals with pharmacy licenses may include under its license any individual practitioner's office or multi-practitioner clinic that is owned and operated by the hospital and listed on the pharmacy application.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0	
House	93	4	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 24, 2015  
May 11, 2015 (Section 1)