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SENATE BILL 5178

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session

By Senators Bailey, Keiser, and Conway

Read first time 01/16/17. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1            AN ACT Relating to requiring the department of health to develop  
2 a hearing loss education program for health care professionals; and  
3 adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.70  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7            (1) The department, in consultation with the disciplining  
8 authorities as defined in RCW 18.130.040, must establish an ongoing  
9 hearing loss educational program as an integral part of its health  
10 professions regulation. The educational program must train health  
11 care professionals in identifying hearing loss in older adults and  
12 must include symptoms of hearing loss such as being noncommunicative,  
13 not responding to direct questions, or responding inappropriately to  
14 direct questions. The hearing loss educational program must be  
15 developed in collaboration with education programs that train  
16 students in that health profession. A disciplining authority may  
17 require that instructors of continuing education or continuing  
18 competency programs integrate the educational program into their  
19 curricula when it is appropriate to the subject matter of the  
20 instruction, with special emphasis on those health care professions

1 who are likely to work with older adults or adults displaying  
2 symptoms of dementia.

3 (2) No funds from the health professions account may be used to  
4 fund activities under this section unless the disciplining authority  
5 authorizes expenditures from its proportions of the account. A  
6 disciplining authority may defray costs by authorizing a fee to be  
7 charged for participants or materials relating to any sponsored  
8 program.

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