

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5503

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long Term Care, February 16, 2023

Title: An act relating to establishing requirements for uniform clinical placement hours for nursing education programs.

Brief Description: Establishing requirements for uniform clinical placement hours for nursing education programs.

Sponsors: Senators Robinson, Cleveland, Mullet, Holy, Randall, Nobles and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 2/10/23, 2/16/23 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Requires the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission to limit the number of clinical or direct patient experience hours required for registered nurse and licensed practical nurse licensure.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5503 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Rivers, Ranking Member; Muzzall, Assistant Ranking Member; Conway, Dhingra, Holy, Padden, Randall and Van De Wege.

Staff: Andie Parnell (786-7439)

Background: The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) is responsible for licensure, license renewal, and discipline of licensed practical nurses (LPN) and registered nurses (RN). The Commission also approves nursing education programs,

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curricula, and examination requirements for license applicants.

To receive an LPN, an applicant must:

- earn a nursing degree or certificate from an accredited LPN nursing program or technical college;
- pass the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN); and
- submit the required documentation.

To receive an RN, an applicant must:

- earn a degree from an accredited nursing program, or, an Associate Degree in Nursing from an approved two-year or technical college nursing program, or, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from an approved four-year or university nursing program;
- pass the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses administered by NCSBN; and
- submit the required information.

All nursing programs preparing students for licensure must provide faculty planned clinical or direct patient care experiences based on program outcomes and goals. The number of clinical or direct patient care experience hours must be at least:

- 300 hours for LPN programs;
- 500 hours for associate degree nursing programs; and
- 600 hours for bachelors of science in nursing education program.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): The Commission must limit the number of clinical or direct patient care experience hours required for RN and LPN licensure. The number of clinical or direct patient care experience hours must be at most:

- 300 hours for LPN programs;
- 500 hours for associate degree nursing programs; and
- 600 hours for bachelors of science in nursing programs.

The Commission must continue to count the number of simulated training hours in a manner consistent with the Washington Administrative Code as approved by the Commission. According to the Washington Administrative Code, a nursing education program may use simulation as a substitute for traditional clinical or direct patient care experiences, after approval by the commission, not to exceed fifty percent of its clinical hours for a particular course.

The Commission must also annually review the number of hours and may adjust if necessitated by the national licensing or accreditation standards.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Allows nursing education programs to substitute clinical and direct patient care experiences with simulated hours in a manner consistent with the Washington Administrative Code.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This bill is simple and important. Restricting the number of clinical hours required for nursing education programs adds flexibility, and helps get more students into the workforce. This does not change the subject matter or quality of experiential hours, but uses resources effectively and opens up clinical rotation for other students.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator June Robinson, Prime Sponsor; Renee Rassilyer-Bomers; Lisa Thatcher, WSHA; Lindsey Grad, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW; Ian Goodhew, UW Medicine.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.