
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1304

Brief Description: Concerning the administration of drugs by health care assistants.

Sponsors: Representatives Jinkins, Harris, Green, Cody, Van De Wege, Kelley, Schmick, Bailey, Clibborn, Moeller, Hinkle and Reykdal.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Clarifies that only category C and E Health Care Assistants may administer certain over-the-counter and legend drugs.

Hearing Date: 1/26/11

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

A Certified Health Care Assistant is authorized to provide assistance to certain licensed health care practitioners, such as physicians, nurses, and naturopaths. A licensed health practitioner may delegate certain functions to the Health Care Assistant such as administering skin tests, injections, and performing blood withdrawals.

Each Health Care Assistant is certified by the facility in which they are employed, or by the practitioner who delegates functions to the Health Care Assistant, pursuant to standards adopted by the Department of Health (DOH) in rule. The facility or practitioner must submit a roster of certified Health Care Assistants to the DOH.

Health Care Assistants are divided into seven different categories based on differing educational, training, and experiential requirements. The different tasks each category of Health Assistant may perform are as follows (all Health Care Assistants may administer vaccines):

- Category A: venous and capillary invasive procedures for blood withdrawal;
- Category B: arterial invasive procedures for blood withdrawal;

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- Category C: intradermal, subcutaneous, and intramuscular injections for diagnostic agents and the administration of skin tests;
- Category D: intravenous injections for diagnostic agents;
- Category E: intradermal, subcutaneous, and intramuscular injections and the administration of skin tests;
- Category F: intravenous injections for therapeutic agents;
- Category G: hemodialysis

In 2009 the Legislature authorized Health Care Assistants to administer certain over-the-counter drugs (e.g., Benadryl, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, aspirin, Neosporin) and certain legend drugs (e.g., kenalog, hydrocortisone cream, raglan, compazine). The administration of these drugs is limited to oral, topical, rectal, otic, ophthalmic, or inhaled routes and must be pursuant to a written order of a supervising health care practitioner. Only Category C or E Health Care Assistants may administer oral drugs.

The provisions allowing Health Care Assistants to administer drugs expire on July 1, 2013.

Summary of Bill:

Only category C or E Health Care Assistants may administer over-the-counter drugs and legend drugs (as opposed to "oral" over-the-counter and legend drugs).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/20/11.

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