

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1640

As Passed House:
February 25, 2011

Title: An act relating to respiratory care practitioners.

Brief Description: Concerning respiratory care practitioners.

Sponsors: Representatives Green, Hinkle, Cody and Moeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/9/11, 2/17/11 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/25/11, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the types of practitioners under whose order and direction a respiratory care practitioner may practice.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Jinkins, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Hinkle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Clibborn, Green, Harris, Kelley, Moeller and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

A respiratory care practitioner (RCP) works with patients who have deficiencies and abnormalities affecting the cardiopulmonary system and associated systems. A RCP must be licensed and registered in order to practice, unless exempted, and must be under the order and qualified medical direction of a physician.

The practice of respiratory care covers an array of procedures, including: (1) the administration of prescribed medical gases; (2) postural drainage, chest percussion, and

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vibration; and (3) the insertion of devices to draw, analyze, infuse, or monitor pressure in blood as prescribed by a physician or an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP).

Summary of Bill:

The types of practitioners under whose order and direction a RCP may practice are expanded to "health care practitioners" instead of "physicians." "Health care practitioner" is defined to include:

- physicians;
- osteopathic physicians and surgeons; and
- the following professions acting within the scope of their respective licenses:
 1. podiatric physicians and surgeons;
 2. ARNPs;
 3. naturopaths;
 4. physician assistants; and
 5. osteopathic physician assistants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will help provide health care to Washington citizens and is consistent with the idea of a health care team. This bill brings the statutes in line with current practice. When RCPs were first licensed, many of the professions in this bill were not that involved, but are now integral. The ability of a RCP to take direction from these professions has been recognized by the federal government.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Green, prime sponsor; and Gary Wickman, Respiratory Care Society of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.