

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia, Washington

Bil Analysis

Bil No. HB 1603

Regulation of disclosure of medical and health research records.

Brief title

Hearing Date 2/26/99

Rep(s) Murray Parlette

Sponsor(s)

Staff Scot MacColl

State Government Committee

Phone 786-7106

BACKGROUND:

The Open Public Records Act (RCW 42.17) commonly known as the public disclosure law, makes all public documents subject to release by request. Numerous exemptions to the public disclosure requirements are codified in state and local government codes. The act requires that records specifically listed within a statute are exempt from public inspection and copying.

However, the Uniform Health Care Information Act states that a health care provider may not disclose health care information about a patient to any other person without the patient's written authorization. Health care providers also are prohibited from disclosing health care information. There are specific exemptions to this requirement which allow the release of health care information without written authorization.

SUMMARY:

An exception to the Uniform Health Care Information Act which requires that vital statistics be made available for inspection, copying, and use by a health care organization in connection with medical health care projects is determined by an institutional board.

The determinative institutional board must meet the following requirements: the project of sufficient importance outweighs the invasion of privacy; impractical to disclose; the vital statistics of individual identity information is safeguarded from disclosure; persons' statistics are protected against identification of the research project; and the project contains procedures to destroy identifying information at the earliest opportunity.

Vital statistics records held by government include name, address, gender, date of registration, number, and pertinent dates of birth, death, marriage, divorce, and annulment.

FISCANOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment session which bill passed.