

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2452

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 27, 1998

Title: An act relating to defining medication assistance in community-based settings.

Brief Description: Defining medication assistance in community-based settings.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Backlund, Cody, Parlette, Kastama, DeBolt, Dyer, Lambert, Koster, Sherstad, Benson, Anderson and Zellinsky).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/24/98, 2/27/98 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton, Franklin, Strannigan and Wojahn.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Currently, only practitioners with prescriptive authority specified by law may administer prescription or legend drugs. These include physicians, osteopathic physicians, physician assistants, dentists, podiatrists, veterinarians, and to a limited extent advanced registered nurse practitioners, optometrists and naturopaths. Administration of legend drugs includes the direct application of a legend drug by injection, inhalation, ingestion or other means, to the body of a patient.

Patients may also administer their own legend drugs in consultation with the practitioner. But a physical or mental limitation may prevent them from self-administering their drugs and they may require some mechanical assistance. There is no consistent definition in law for medication assistance, the act of assisting a patient to self-administer their own medications by a person other than a practitioner. Residents of boarding homes may receive medication assistance, and residents of adult family homes use enablers for facilitating the self-administration of their medications. Medication assistance can take different forms such as opening containers for the resident, or handing the container or medication to the resident.

Summary of Bill: There is a legislative statement that individuals residing in community-based settings, such as adult family homes, boarding homes and residential care settings for the developmentally disabled, including an individual's own home, might need medication assistance due to a physical or mental limitation that prevents them from self-administering their legend drugs. The right of an individual to refuse medications and the requirements for informed consent are not affected.

Medication assistance is defined in the Legend Drug Act as assistance rendered by a nonpractitioner to an individual residing in a community-based setting to facilitate the individual to self-administer a legend drug or controlled substance, where a practitioner has determined, in consultation with the individual, that medication assistance is appropriate. It includes reminding the individual, placing the medication in the individual's hand or other means defined by rule. Medication assistance does not include intravenous medications or injectable medications.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: There needs to be a clear definition of medication assistance in statute. People who need help with their medications should not have to hire a nurse to swallow a pill.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Jeff Larsen, WSRCC; Kathy Leitch, AASA/DSHS; Patty Hayes, DOH.