

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5829

C 258 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing for the registration of nursing technicians.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Deccio, Thibaudeau and Winsley).

Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care
House Committee on Health Care

Background: A nursing technician is defined in rule as a nursing student currently enrolled in an approved nursing program and employed for the purpose of giving help, assistance, and support in the performance of registered nursing services. The purpose of nursing technician positions is to provide an opportunity for students to gain work experience commensurate with their education.

Some licensed nursing homes and hospitals employ nursing technicians. There is concern that the rules exist without proper statutory authority.

Summary: A nursing technician is defined as a nursing student employed in a licensed hospital or nursing home who is currently enrolled in good standing in an approved nursing program and has not graduated, or graduated from an approved nursing program within the past 30 days, or graduated from an approved nursing program within the past 60 days and has demonstrated good cause to the Secretary of Health.

Nursing technicians are authorized to perform specific nursing functions within the limits of their education. They are also prohibited from performing certain tasks, such as administering chemotherapy or scheduled drugs. Nursing technicians may function only under the direct supervision of a registered nurse, who agrees to act as a supervisor and is immediately available to the nursing technician. Employers of nursing technicians must train both the nursing technicians and the supervising registered nurses as to the provisions of the law. The nursing program must verify which specific nursing functions the nursing technicians are qualified to perform. Nursing technicians are responsible for their specific nursing function.

A new registered health care profession is created. In order to practice or hold oneself out as a nursing technician, such a person must register with the Secretary of Health and pay the appropriate fee. Nursing technicians are also added to those health professions regulated by the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

The Department of Health is authorized to investigate complaints of violations of employer use of nursing technicians in hospitals. The Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to investigate complaints of employer use of nursing technicians in nursing homes.

The Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission is authorized to adopt rules implementing the procedural requirements and fees for renewal of the registration.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	84	0	(House amended)
Senate	43	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: May 12, 2003