
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2326

Brief Description: Reporting end-of-life care policies.

Sponsors: Representatives Macri, Robinson, Rude, Cody, Leavitt, Thai, Ormsby, Wylie, Doglio, Kloba, Riccelli, Tharinger and Appleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires hospitals to submit policies related to end-of-life care to the Department of Health (DOH).
- Requires the DOH to update a form that provides consumers with information about what end-of-life care services are and are not provided at each hospital.

Hearing Date: 1/15/20

Staff: Kim Weidenaar (786-7120).

Background:

Access to Care Policies.

Governor Inslee's Directive 13-12 directed the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt rules improving transparency for consumer information, by requiring hospitals supply nondiscrimination, end-of-life care, and reproductive health care policies, which consumers must have access to on the DOH's webpage. The DOH rules require every hospital to submit these policies, which must be posted on the hospitals and the DOH's websites.

Legislation enacted in 2019 requires every hospital to submit to the DOH its policies related to access to care regarding admission, nondiscrimination, and reproductive health care along with a form created by the DOH in consultation with the Washington State Hospital Association and patient advocacy groups. The form must provide the public with specific information about what reproductive health care services are and are not performed at each hospital. Submitted policies and the form must be posted on the hospital's website.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Death with Dignity.

The Washington Death with Dignity Act (Act) was enacted by initiative in 2009 and permits a patient to request medication that he or she may self-administer to end his or her life if:

- the patient is a competent adult and a resident of Washington;
- the attending physician and a consulting physician have determined that the patient suffers from a terminal disease and the patient has voluntarily expressed the wish to die;
- the patient has made a request for medication on a form provided in statute; and
- the form is signed and dated by the patient and at least two witnesses who attest to their belief that the patient is competent, acting voluntarily, and not being coerced to sign the request.

Summary of Bill:

Every hospital must submit its access to care policies regarding end-of-life care and the Death with Dignity Act to the Department of Health (DOH), in addition to policies related to admission, nondiscrimination, and reproductive health care. By August 1, 2020, the DOH must update the form hospitals must use to submit alongside access to care policies to include services related to end-of life care and the Death with Dignity Act. The updated form must provide the public with specific information about which end-of-life services are and are not generally available at each hospital.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 1, relating to hospital submission of end-of-life care policies, which takes effect September 1, 2020.