

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 1865

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As of March 25, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to improving health care professional and health care facility patient safety practices.

**Brief Description:** Improving patient safety practices.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Campbell, Morrell, Schual-Berke, Kenney, Haigh, Conway and Santos).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/26/03.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Staff:** Tanya Karwaki (786-7447)

**Background:** Studies have indicated that medical errors are a leading cause of death and injury in the United States. According to the Institute of Medicine, between 44,000 and 98,000 Americans die each year as a result of medical errors.

Washington law requires hospitals to maintain a quality improvement and medical malpractice prevention program. Such programs must include a committee to review the quality of medical care, periodic reviews of the credentials of health care providers, and patient safety-related education programs. Other licensed health care institutions and medical facilities may create their own quality improvement programs with approval of the Department of Health.

**Summary of Bill:** A "Patient Safety Account" is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. The account is funded by contributions from settlements or judgments received by a plaintiff in an action for injuries resulting from health care and by grants or other funds.

The account is administered by the Department of Health. Once the account contains \$100,000, the funds may be used for grants, loans, or other arrangements that support efforts to reduce medical errors and enhance patient safety. The department must establish criteria for the types of programs to receive funds. The criteria must emphasize evidence-based practices recommended by governmental and private organizations including the Agency for Health Care Quality and Research, the Institute of Medicine, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations, and the National Quality Forum.

Only the Secretary of the Department of Health or the secretary's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The department must report to the Legislature by December 1, 2006, on the funds raised and the programs funded.

The Patient Safety Program terminates December 31, 2008.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on March 25, 2003.

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