
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

SB 6739

Brief Description: Granting authority to psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners.

Sponsors: Senators Franklin, Prentice, Marr and Jacobsen.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners to perform several evaluative responsibilities related to people receiving inpatient mental health treatment.

Hearing Date: 2/21/08

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners

Advanced registered nurse practitioners are registered nurses with additional formal specialized training in areas such as pediatrics, midwifery, geriatrics anesthesiology, and psychiatry. Advanced registered nurse practitioners function more independently than registered nurses and assume primary responsibility and accountability for care of their patients. An advanced registered nurse practitioner may examine patients and establish medical diagnoses, admit patients to health care facilities, order and interpret lab tests, implement a plan of care for patients, prescribe medications and refer clients to other health care practitioners or facilities.

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission recognizes a specialty designation for psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners and clinical specialists in psychiatric-mental health nursing.

Decisions Relating to the Use of Antipsychotic Medications

Individuals suffering from mental illness who are found to be gravely disabled or present a likelihood of serious harm have the right to refuse antipsychotic medication. This right can be overridden if it is determined that the failure to medicate may result in a likelihood of serious harm

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or substantial deterioration of the patient or it will substantially prolong the length of involuntary commitment and there is no less intrusive course of treatment than medication that is in the best interests of the person. The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) must adopt rules to address these issues which include an attempt to obtain the informed consent of the patient and the right to refuse antipsychotic medications for up to 30 days unless there is an additional concurring medical opinion approving medication.

A court may appoint a psychiatrist, psychologist, or physician to examine and testify on behalf of a patient at a hearing to authorize the use of antipsychotic medications. A court, however, must appoint a psychiatrist, psychologist, or physician to testify on behalf of a person involuntarily detained where an order for electroconvulsant therapy is being sought.

Summary of Bill:

"Psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners" are defined as licensed advanced registered nurse practitioners who are board certified in advanced practice psychiatric and mental health nursing. Psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners are added to the terms "professional person" and "developmental disabilities professional" who are individuals that perform many of the evaluation and treatment activities for people in the inpatient mental health system.

Advanced nurse practitioners may admit individuals for examination or treatment as a patient in a hospital.

As an alternative to a physician, the opinion of a psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner may be used in determining that a person's condition constitutes an emergency that requires the use of antipsychotic medications prior to the occurrence of a judicial hearing.

A psychiatrist, psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner, or physician in consultation with a mental health professional with prescriptive authority is expressly authorized to provide the concurring medical opinion to allow for the administration of antipsychotic medication in short-term treatment situations.

Psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners are added to the list of health care providers who may be appointed by the court to testify on behalf of a patient who is the subject of a hearing regarding the administration of antipsychotic medications and must be appointed when the hearing relates to the use of electroconvulsant therapy.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.