

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5229

As of January 29, 2021

Title: An act relating to health equity continuing education for health care professionals.

Brief Description: Concerning health equity continuing education for health care professionals.

Sponsors: Senators Randall, Das, Keiser, Lovelett, Nobles, Wilson, C., Dhingra, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Nguyen and Stanford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 1/29/21.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the rule-making authority for each health profession to adopt rules requiring health care professionals to complete health equity education training at least once every four years.
- Requires health equity courses to teach attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable a health care professional to care effectively for patients from diverse cultures, groups, and communities, varying in race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, religion, age, ability, and socioeconomic status..

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Staff: Ricci Crinzi (786-7253)

Background: Continuing education for the health care profession consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a health professional uses while providing service. In Washington, licensed health professions are subject to continuing education requirements established by the rule-making authority and in statute for each health

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profession. Generally, the rule-making authority determines the education subject matter, minimum and maximum number of hours in specified subject matter, and how to obtain approved continuing education programs. The Legislature has also adopted continuing education requirements for health professions on specific topics, including head injury prevention and suicide prevention, treatment, and management.

Summary of Bill: By January 1, 2023, health care professions that are subject to continuing education requirements must adopt rules requiring licensees to complete health equity continuing education training at least once every four years. During rule development, rule-making authorities must consult with patients and communities with lived experiences of health inequalities or racism in the health care system, professional organizations, and the department of health.

Health equity continuing education courses may be taken in addition to or, if a rule-making authority determines the course fulfills existing continuing education requirements, in place of other continuing education requirements imposed by the rule-making authority.

Before January 1, 2022, the secretary and rule-making authorities shall consult with professional organizations, patients, and communities who experienced health inequities or racism in the health care system to develop health equity course information and must provide information to licensees regarding available health equity courses. Rule-making authorities may adopt rules to determine if courses not included in the information meet the continual education requirement.

Continuing education courses must teach attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable a health care professional to care effectively for patients from diverse cultures, groups, and communities, varying in race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, religion, age, ability, and socioeconomic status.

Potential course topics include, but are not limited to:

- strategies for recognizing patterns of health care disparities;
- intercultural communication skills training;
- implicit bias training;
- methods for addressing the emotional well-being of children and youth of diverse backgrounds;
- ensuring equity and antiracism while delivering medical care or therapies;
- structural competency training; and
- cultural safety training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2021.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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