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**HOUSE BILL 2502**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Rule, Slatter, Ramos, Simmons, Santos, Ryu, Nance, Callan, and Bergquist

AN ACT Relating to promoting reproductive autonomy by protecting access to contraceptive methods; reenacting and amending RCW 18.130.180; adding a new section to chapter 18.130 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the protecting reproductive autonomy act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 18.130 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A health care provider licensed under this title whose scope of practice includes performing sterilizations for contraceptive purposes may not require an individual who is seeking a sterilization to meet any special nonmedical qualifications, which are not imposed on individuals seeking other types of health care services. Such prohibited nonmedical qualifications include, but are not limited to, marital status and number of natural children. Such prohibited nonmedical qualifications include age, except that age may be a qualification for determining consent or applicable insurance coverage under state or federal law.

(2) Nothing in this section prohibits requirements relating to the physical or mental condition of the individual or affects the right of the health care provider to provide medical counseling or advice as to whether or not sterilization is appropriate. A health care provider may not provide nonmedical counseling or advice as to whether sterilization is appropriate. This section does not affect existing law with respect to minors.

(3) An individual must voluntarily give informed consent before a health care provider may perform a sterilization for contraceptive purposes.

(4) A licensed health care provider who violates subsection (1) of this section is subject to discipline pursuant to this chapter, the uniform disciplinary act.

(5) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Minor" means any person under the age of 18; and

(b) "Sterilization" means any medical procedure, treatment, or operation for the purpose of rendering an individual permanently incapable of reproducing.

**Sec.**  RCW 18.130.180 and 2023 c 192 s 2 and 2023 c 122 s 4 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

Except as provided in RCW 18.130.450, the following conduct, acts, or conditions constitute unprofessional conduct for any license holder under the jurisdiction of this chapter:

(1) The commission of any act involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, or corruption relating to the practice of the person's profession, whether the act constitutes a crime or not. If the act constitutes a crime, conviction in a criminal proceeding is not a condition precedent to disciplinary action. Upon such a conviction, however, the judgment and sentence is conclusive evidence at the ensuing disciplinary hearing of the guilt of the license holder of the crime described in the indictment or information, and of the person's violation of the statute on which it is based. For the purposes of this section, conviction includes all instances in which a plea of guilty or nolo contendere is the basis for the conviction and all proceedings in which the sentence has been deferred or suspended. Nothing in this section abrogates rights guaranteed under chapter 9.96A RCW;

(2) Misrepresentation or concealment of a material fact in obtaining a license or in reinstatement thereof;

(3) All advertising which is false, fraudulent, or misleading;

(4) Incompetence, negligence, or malpractice which results in injury to a patient or which creates an unreasonable risk that a patient may be harmed. The use of a nontraditional treatment by itself shall not constitute unprofessional conduct, provided that it does not result in injury to a patient or create an unreasonable risk that a patient may be harmed;

(5) Suspension, revocation, or restriction of the individual's license to practice any health care profession by competent authority in any state, federal, or foreign jurisdiction, a certified copy of the order, stipulation, or agreement being conclusive evidence of the revocation, suspension, or restriction;

(6) The possession, use, prescription for use, or distribution of controlled substances or legend drugs in any way other than for legitimate or therapeutic purposes, diversion of controlled substances or legend drugs, the violation of any drug law, or prescribing controlled substances for oneself;

(7) Violation of any state or federal statute or administrative rule regulating the profession in question, including any statute or rule defining or establishing standards of patient care or professional conduct or practice;

(8) Failure to cooperate with the disciplining authority by:

(a) Not furnishing any papers, documents, records, or other items;

(b) Not furnishing in writing a full and complete explanation covering the matter contained in the complaint filed with the disciplining authority;

(c) Not responding to subpoenas issued by the disciplining authority, whether or not the recipient of the subpoena is the accused in the proceeding; or

(d) Not providing reasonable and timely access for authorized representatives of the disciplining authority seeking to perform practice reviews at facilities utilized by the license holder;

(9) Failure to comply with an order issued by the disciplining authority or a stipulation for informal disposition entered into with the disciplining authority;

(10) Aiding or abetting an unlicensed person to practice when a license is required;

(11) Violations of rules established by any health agency;

(12) Practice beyond the scope of practice as defined by law or rule;

(13) Misrepresentation or fraud in any aspect of the conduct of the business or profession;

(14) Failure to adequately supervise auxiliary staff to the extent that the consumer's health or safety is at risk;

(15) Engaging in a profession involving contact with the public while suffering from a contagious or infectious disease involving serious risk to public health;

(16) Promotion for personal gain of any unnecessary or inefficacious drug, device, treatment, procedure, or service;

(17) Conviction of any gross misdemeanor or felony relating to the practice of the person's profession. For the purposes of this subsection, conviction includes all instances in which a plea of guilty or nolo contendere is the basis for conviction and all proceedings in which the sentence has been deferred or suspended. Nothing in this section abrogates rights guaranteed under chapter 9.96A RCW;

(18) The offering, undertaking, or agreeing to cure or treat disease by a secret method, procedure, treatment, or medicine, or the treating, operating, or prescribing for any health condition by a method, means, or procedure which the licensee refuses to divulge upon demand of the disciplining authority;

(19) The willful betrayal of a practitioner-patient privilege as recognized by law;

(20) Violation of chapter 19.68 RCW or a pattern of violations of RCW 41.05.700(8), 48.43.735(8), 48.49.020, 48.49.030, 71.24.335(8), or 74.09.325(8);

(21) Interference with an investigation or disciplinary proceeding by willful misrepresentation of facts before the disciplining authority or its authorized representative, or by the use of threats or harassment against any patient or witness to prevent them from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding or any other legal action, or by the use of financial inducements to any patient or witness to prevent or attempt to prevent him or her from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding;

(22) Current misuse of:

(a) Alcohol;

(b) Controlled substances; or

(c) Legend drugs;

(23) Abuse of a client or patient or sexual contact with a client or patient;

(24) Acceptance of more than a nominal gratuity, hospitality, or subsidy offered by a representative or vendor of medical or health-related products or services intended for patients, in contemplation of a sale or for use in research publishable in professional journals, where a conflict of interest is presented, as defined by rules of the disciplining authority, in consultation with the department, based on recognized professional ethical standards;

(25) Violation of RCW 18.130.420;

(26) Performing conversion therapy on a patient under age eighteen;

(27) Violation of RCW 18.130.430;

(28) Violation of RCW 18.130.460;

(29) Violation of section 2 of this act.

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