

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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SENATE BILL 1275*

Short Title: Health Care Personnel Registry Expansion. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Dannelly, Allran, Bingham, Malone; Dorsett, Jenkins, Lucas,
and Rand.

Referred to: Health Care.

May 11, 2006

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXPAND THE HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL REGISTRY BY
AMENDING THE DEFINITIONS OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND
HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL, TO PROHIBIT THE EMPLOYMENT BY
HEALTH CARE FACILITIES OF ANY PERSON WHO HAS A
SUBSTANTIATED FINDING ON THE HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL
REGISTRY, AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DIVISION OF
FACILITY SERVICES FOR STAFFING, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE STUDY
COMMISSION ON AGING.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 131E-256 reads as rewritten:

"§ 131E-256. Health Care Personnel Registry.

(a) The Department shall establish and maintain a health care personnel registry containing the names of all health care personnel working in health care facilities in North Carolina who have:

(1) Been subject to findings by the Department of:

- a. Neglect or abuse of a resident in a health care facility or a person to whom home care services as defined by G.S. 131E-136 or hospice services as defined by G.S. 131E-201 are being provided.
- b. Misappropriation of the property of a resident in a health care facility, as defined in subsection (b) of this section including places where home care services as defined by G.S. 131E-136 or hospice services as defined by G.S. 131E-201 are being provided.
- c. Misappropriation of the property of a health care facility.
- d. Diversion of drugs belonging to a health care facility or to a patient or client.

1 e. Fraud against a health care facility or against a patient or client
2 for whom the employee is providing services.

- 3 (2) Been accused of any of the acts listed in subdivision (1) of this
4 subsection, but only after the Department has screened the allegation
5 and determined that an investigation is required.

6 The Health Care Personnel Registry shall also contain all findings by the
7 Department of neglect of a resident in a nursing facility or abuse of a resident in a
8 nursing facility or misappropriation of the property of a resident in a nursing facility by
9 a nurse aide that are contained in the nurse aide registry under G.S. 131E-255.

10 (a1) The Department shall include in the registry a brief statement of any
11 individual disputing the finding entered against the individual in the health care
12 personnel registry pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section.

13 (b) For the purpose of this section, the following are considered to be "health care
14 facilities":

- 15 (1) Adult Care Homes as defined in G.S. 131D-2.
16 (2) Hospitals as defined in G.S. 131E-76.
17 (3) Home Care Agencies as defined in G.S. 131E-136.
18 (4) Nursing Pools as defined by G.S. 131E-154.2.
19 (5) Hospices as defined by G.S. 131E-201.
20 (6) Nursing Facilities as defined by G.S. 131E-255.
21 (7) State-Operated Facilities as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)f.
22 (8) Residential Facilities as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)e.
23 (9) 24-Hour Facilities as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)g.
24 (10) Licensable Facilities as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)b.
25 (11) Multiunit Assisted Housing with Services as defined in G.S. 131D-2.
26 (12) Community Based Providers of Services for the Mentally Ill, the
27 Developmentally Disabled, and Substance Abusers that are not
28 required to be licensed under Article 2 of Chapter 122C.
29 (13) Agencies providing in-home aide services funded through the Home
30 and Community Care Block Grant Program in accordance with
31 G.S. 143B-181.1(a)11.

32 (c) For the purpose of this section, the term "health care personnel" means any
33 unlicensed staff of a health care facility that has direct access to residents, clients, or
34 their property. Direct access includes any health care facility unlicensed staff that during
35 the course of employment has the opportunity for direct contact with an individual or an
36 individual's property, when that individual is a resident or person to whom services are
37 provided. ~~the following are considered to be "health care personnel":~~

- 38 (1) ~~In an adult care home, an adult care personal aide who is any person~~
39 ~~who either performs or directly supervises others who perform task~~
40 ~~functions in activities of daily living which are personal functions~~
41 ~~essential for the health and well-being of residents such as bathing,~~
42 ~~dressing, personal hygiene, ambulation or locomotion, transferring,~~
43 ~~toileting, and eating.~~
44 (2) A nurse aide.

1 ~~(3) An in-home aide or an in-home personal care aide who provides~~
2 ~~hands-on paraprofessional services.~~

3 ~~(4) Unlicensed assistant personnel who provide hands-on care, including,~~
4 ~~but not limited to, habilitative aides and health care technicians.~~

5 (d) Health care personnel who wish to contest findings under subdivision (a)(1)
6 of this section are entitled to an administrative hearing as provided by the
7 Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. A petition for a
8 contested case shall be filed within 30 days of the mailing of the written notice of the
9 Department's intent to place its findings about the person in the Health Care Personnel
10 Registry.

11 (d1) Health care personnel who wish to contest the placement of information
12 under subdivision (a)(2) of this section are entitled to an administrative hearing as
13 provided by the Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. A
14 petition for a contested case hearing shall be filed within 30 days of the mailing of the
15 written notice of the Department's intent to place information about the person in the
16 Health Care Personnel Registry under subdivision (a)(2) of this section. Health care
17 personnel who have filed a petition contesting the placement of information in the
18 health care personnel registry under subdivision (a)(2) of this section are deemed to
19 have challenged any findings made by the Department at the conclusion of its
20 investigation.

21 (d2) A health care facility shall not employ any person for whom a substantiated
22 finding has been entered on the Health Care Personnel Registry. Before hiring health
23 care personnel into a health care facility or service, every employer at a health care
24 facility shall access the Health Care Personnel Registry and shall note each incident of
25 access in the appropriate business files.

26 (e) The Department shall provide an employer or potential employer of any
27 person listed on the Health Care Personnel Registry information concerning the nature
28 of the finding or allegation and the status of the investigation.

29 (f) No person shall be liable for providing any information for the health care
30 personnel registry if the information is provided in good faith. Neither an employer,
31 potential employer, nor the Department shall be liable for using any information from
32 the health care personnel registry if the information is used in good faith for the purpose
33 of screening prospective applicants for employment or reviewing the employment status
34 of an employee.

35 (g) Health care facilities shall ensure that the Department is notified of all
36 allegations against health care personnel, including injuries of unknown source, which
37 appear to be related to any act listed in subdivision (a)(1) of this section. Facilities must
38 have evidence that all alleged acts are investigated and must make every effort to
39 protect residents from harm while the investigation is in progress. The results of all
40 investigations must be reported to the Department within five working days of the initial
41 notification to the Department.

42 (h) The North Carolina Medical Care Commission shall adopt, amend, and repeal
43 all rules necessary for the implementation of this section.

1 (i) In the case of a finding of neglect under subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
2 this section, the Department shall establish a procedure to permit health care personnel
3 to petition the Department to have his or her name removed from the registry upon a
4 determination that:

5 (1) The employment and personal history of the nurse aid does not reflect
6 a pattern of abusive behavior or neglect;

7 (2) The neglect involved in the original finding was a singular occurrence;
8 and

9 (3) The petition for removal is submitted after the expiration of the
10 one-year period which began on the date the petitioner's name was
11 added to the registry under subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this
12 section."

13 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
14 Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Facility Services, the sum of
15 one million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$1,700,000) for the 2006-2007 fiscal year,
16 to be used to establish positions to handle increases in allegations and investigations.

17 **SECTION 3.** Section 1 of this act becomes effective October 1, 2006.
18 Section 2 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2006. The remainder of this act is
19 effective when it becomes law.