

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2315

---

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, February 28, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to recreation therapy.

**Brief Description:** Providing for the registration of recreational therapists.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, McDermott, Kenney and Tokuda).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/27/02, 2/28/02 [DP].

---

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

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Fraser, Parlette and Winsley.

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

**Background:** Currently, Washington does not regulate the practice of recreational therapy as a health profession. Recreational therapists use recreation and/or community activities to treat physical, cognitive, emotional, and social conditions associated with illness or disability. Treatments may include the use of arts and crafts, animals, sports, games, dance and movement, drama, music, and community outings.

**Summary of Bill:** A registration program for recreation therapy is established under the Secretary of Health. Persons who practice or represent themselves as a registered recreation therapist must register with the Department of Health.

Recreation therapy is defined as the use of recreational and/or community activities to include leisure counseling and community integration as treatment intervention to improve functional leisure and community competence of persons with physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or social disabilities.

The secretary is authorized to adopt rules implementing the registration program and to establish registration fees and procedures necessary to administer the program. The secretary is also the disciplinary authority under the Uniform Discipline Act governing the issuance and denial of registration, unauthorized practice, and the discipline of persons registered under this act for unprofessional conduct.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2003.

**Testimony For:** Recreational therapists are important in helping patients meet their rehabilitation goals. Recreational therapists work with all ages and disabilities, providing therapy for individuals with physical, cognitive, social, behavioral and emotional issues. Their outcomes are directed at decreasing hospitalization and reducing secondary health conditions that increase health care costs. This bill will increase patient safety and the quality of patient care.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Cody, prime sponsor (pro); David Tostenrude, Washington State Therapeutic Recreation Association (pro); Terry Raub, Washington State Therapeutic Recreation Association (pro); Jodi McKenzie, Washington State Therapeutic Recreation Association (pro).