
Health Care Committee

HB 1569

Brief Description: Regarding quality assurance in boarding homes, nursing homes, hospitals, peer review organizations, and coordinated quality improvement plans.

Sponsors: Representatives Morrell, Clibborn, Skinner, Schual-Berke, Green, Moeller, Cody, Curtis, Condotta, Chase, O'Brien and Kenney.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes nursing homes to maintain a quality assurance committee.
- Information and documents developed for a quality assurance committee are not subject to discovery in legal proceedings.

Hearing Date: 2/22/05

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

Many believe that facilitation of the quality assurance process in licensed boarding homes and nursing homes will promote safe patient care and may reduce property and liability insurance premium costs for such facilities.

It is the opinion of many that heightening the protection of quality assurance committee records will promote self-monitoring of patient care outcomes and allow facilities to correct identified problems at the earliest point in time.

Summary of Bill:

Nursing homes may maintain a quality assurance committee. The committee must, at a minimum include a director of nursing services, a physician and three other members from the staff of the facility. The committee must meet quarterly with the purpose of identifying issues that may adversely affect quality of care and services.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) may not require, and the long-term care ombudsman cannot request, disclosure of any quality assurance committee records or reports unless otherwise statutorily required.

The information and documents, including complaints and incident reports, created specifically for, and collected and maintained by a quality improvement committees for boarding homes and nursing homes, are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in any civil action.

Participants in the processes of the quality assurance committees for boarding homes and nursing homes, are not permitted or required to testify in any civil action as to the content of proceedings or the documents and information prepared specifically for the committee.

Information and documents disclosed by one quality assurance committee to another quality assurance committee and any information and documents created or maintained as a result of the sharing of information is not subject to the discovery process.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 17, 2005.

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