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HOUSE BILL NO. 979

Offered January 24, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 54.1-2952 of the Code of Virginia, relating to physician assistants.

Patrons—Jones, S.C., Landes, McDonnell, Melvin, Nixon and Purkey

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 54.1-2952 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 54.1-2952. Supervision of assistants by licensed physician, or podiatrist; services that may be performed by assistants; responsibility of licensee; employment of assistants.

A. A physician, or a podiatrist licensed under this chapter may apply to the Board to supervise assistants and delegate certain acts which constitute the practice of medicine to the extent and in the manner authorized by the Board.

No licensee shall be allowed to supervise more than two assistants at any one time.

Any professional corporation or partnership of any licensee, any hospital and any commercial enterprise having medical facilities for its employees which are supervised by one or more physicians, or podiatrists may employ one or more assistants in accordance with the provisions of this section.

Activities shall be delegated in a manner consistent with sound medical practice and the protection of the health and safety of the patient. Such services shall be limited to those which are educational, diagnostic, therapeutic or preventive in nature, but shall not include the establishment of a final diagnosis or treatment plan for the patient or the prescribing or dispensing of drugs, except as provided in § 54.1-2952.1. *In addition, a licensee is authorized to delegate and supervise services, which include initial and ongoing evaluation and treatment of any patient in a hospital, including its emergency department, when performed under the direction, supervision and control of the supervising licensee. When practicing in a hospital, the assistant shall report any acute or significant finding or change in a patient's clinical status to the supervising physician within an hour, or sooner if circumstances so require, and shall record such finding in appropriate institutional records. The assistant shall transfer the direction of care of a patient with a life-threatening injury or illness to a supervising physician. The supervising physician shall review, prior to the patient's discharge, the services rendered to each patient by a physician assistant in a hospital's emergency department. An assistant practicing in an emergency department shall be under the supervision of a physician present within the facility.*

B. No assistant shall perform any delegated acts except at the direction of the licensee and under his supervision and control. *No physician assistant practicing in a hospital shall render care to a patient unless the physician responsible for that patient has signed the protocol, pursuant to regulations of the Board, to act as supervising physician for that assistant.* Every licensee, professional corporation or partnership of licensees, hospital or commercial enterprise that employs an assistant shall be fully responsible for the acts of the assistant in the care and treatment of human beings.

INTRODUCED

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