

Approved: 2-10-98
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sandy Praeger at 10:00 a.m. on February 2, 1998 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Robin Kempf, Legislative Research Department
Norman Furse, Revisor of Statutes
Jo Ann Bunten, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Doug Smith, Kansas Academy of Physician Assistants

Others attending: See attached list

Approval of Minutes

Senator Jones made a motion to approve the Committee minutes of January 27, 28, and 29, 1998, as written, seconded by Senator Steineger. The motion carried.

Introduction of Bills

Doug Smith, representing the Kansas Academy of Physician Assistants, requested a Committee bill that would modify the present registration process for a Physician Assistant to licensure. (Attachment 1) Senator Jones made a motion that the Committee recommend introduction of the proposed legislation, seconded by Senator Hardenburger. The motion carried.

Review and Action on 1997 Committee Bills

After Committee discussion, the following action was taken on 1997 Committee bills:

SB 241- Adult care home licensure act definitions

Senator Jones made a motion that the Committee recommend SB 241 be reported adversely, seconded by Senator Hardenburger. The motion carried.

SB 248 - Board of Healing Arts regulation of licensees

Senator Hardenburger made a motion that the Committee recommend SB 248 be reported adversely, seconded by Senator Langworthy. The motion carried.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 3, 1998.

KANSAS ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

Request for Introduction Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

February 2, 1998

*The Honorable Senator Sandy Praeger, Chairperson
and Honorable Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee:*

The members of the Kansas Academy of Physician Assistants request introduction of legislation to modify the present registration process for a Physician Assistant to licensure.

There are 280 Physician Assistants ("PA") currently registered in Kansas with the State Board of Healing Arts. PAs serve an important role, as an extension of their responsible physician and as health care providers. In many cases, the PA is the only source of basic health care available on a daily basis, particularly in rural areas.

A Physician Assistant can perform a wide range of medical duties, from primary family medicine to high-technology specialties, such as medical research. All of these duties, whether performed in a hospital, clinic or private physician office, are done under the direction and supervision of a responsible physician, or physician approved protocols.

The history of the Physician/PA team relationship has always been one of dependent practice with a supervising physician. Changing to licensure does not indicate a push toward independent practice. PAs remain committed to practicing in a dependent role with physician supervision. Physician Assistant licensure will not create any change in the current scope of practice for a PA, nor does it hinder other practitioners in the performance of their duties.

By seeking a transition from registration to licensure, PAs are actually asking for more rigid oversight. Licensure would provide the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts with greater ability to regulate the acts and practices of a Physician Assistant. A move from registration to licensure will insure that Kansans receive the highest quality of health care by holding PAs to the most rigorous form of regulation and appropriately high standards. Licensure would improve the public's access to care, and improve the physician's ability to efficiently utilize Physician Assistants as apart of a health care team.

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Attachment No. 1

As an extension of their responsible Physician, PAs should be held to the same regulatory standard. Licensure, as a form of regulation for Physician Assistants, allows the State of Kansas to keep pace with the evolving and expanding role that Physician Assistants fulfill as a members of an important medical practice team.

Thank you for your consideration.

Douglas E. Smith
Kansas Academy of Physician Assistants

Proposed licensure legislation provides and accomplishes:

Clean up references to "Physicians' Assistants" to "Physician Assistant".

Qualification for License - provides Kansas Board of Healing Arts with ability to gather more information.

Revocation of License - provides Kansas Board of Healing Arts with defined grounds for disciplinary action .

Temporary License - provides for expiration and clear cut action by Kansas Board of Healing Arts.

Scope of Practice - clearly defines the dependent role of the Physician Assistant with a Responsible Physician and the services provided.

Definition of Supervision - provides for supervision at remote sites, essential for rural communities.

Defines and excludes certain care givers from provisions of act.

Professional conduct - requires quality, professional care from PA.