

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 476

An act relating to respiratory therapy; amending s. 468.352, F.S.; revising and providing definitions applicable to the regulation of respiratory therapy; amending s. 468.355, F.S.; revising provisions relating to respiratory therapy licensure and testing requirements; amending s. 468.368, F.S.; revising exemptions from respiratory therapy licensure requirements; repealing s. 468.356, F.S., relating to the approval of educational programs; repealing s. 468.357, F.S., relating to licensure by examination; providing effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 468.352, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

(Substantial rewording of section. See s. 468.352, F.S., for present text.)

468.352 Definitions.—As used in this part, the term:

(1) “Board” means the Board of Respiratory Care.

(2) “Certified respiratory therapist” means any person licensed pursuant to this part who is certified by the National Board for Respiratory Care or its successor; who is employed to deliver respiratory care services, under the order of a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 458 or chapter 459, in accordance with protocols established by a hospital or other health care provider or the board; and who functions in situations of unsupervised patient contact requiring individual judgment.

(3) “Critical care” means care given to a patient in any setting involving a life-threatening emergency.

(4) “Department” means the Department of Health.

(5) “Direct supervision” means practicing under the direction of a licensed, registered, or certified respiratory therapist who is physically on the premises and readily available, as defined by the board.

(6) “Physician supervision” means supervision and control by a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 who assumes the legal liability for the services rendered by the personnel employed in his or her office. Except in the case of an emergency, physician supervision requires the easy availability of the physician within the office or the physical presence of the physician for consultation and direction of the actions of the persons who deliver respiratory care services.

(7) “Practice of respiratory care” or “respiratory therapy” means the allied health specialty associated with the cardiopulmonary system that is practiced under the orders of a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 and in accordance with protocols, policies, and procedures established by a hospital or other health care provider or the board, including

the assessment, diagnostic evaluation, treatment, management, control, rehabilitation, education, and care of patients in all care settings.

(8) “Registered respiratory therapist” means any person licensed under this part who is registered by the National Board for Respiratory Care or its successor, and who is employed to deliver respiratory care services under the order of a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459, in accordance with protocols established by a hospital or other health care provider or the board, and who functions in situations of unsupervised patient contact requiring individual judgment.

(9) “Respiratory care practitioner” means any person licensed under this part who is employed to deliver respiratory care services, under direct supervision, pursuant to the order of a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459.

(10) “Respiratory care services” includes:

(a) Evaluation and disease management.

(b) Diagnostic and therapeutic use of respiratory equipment, devices, or medical gas.

(c) Administration of drugs, as duly ordered or prescribed by a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 and in accordance with protocols, policies, and procedures established by a hospital or other health care provider or the board.

(d) Initiation, management, and maintenance of equipment to assist and support ventilation and respiration.

(e) Diagnostic procedures, research, and therapeutic treatment and procedures, including measurement of ventilatory volumes, pressures, and flows; specimen collection and analysis of blood for gas transport and acid/base determinations; pulmonary-function testing; and other related physiological monitoring of cardiopulmonary systems.

(f) Cardiopulmonary rehabilitation.

(g) Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, advanced cardiac life support, neonatal resuscitation, and pediatric advanced life support, or equivalent functions.

(h) Insertion and maintenance of artificial airways and intravascular catheters.

(i) Education of patients, families, the public, or other health care providers, including disease process and management programs and smoking prevention and cessation programs.

(j) Initiation and management of hyperbaric oxygen.

Section 2. Section 468.355, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

(Substantial rewording of section. See

s. 468.355, F.S., for present text.)

468.355 Licensure requirements.—To be eligible for licensure by the board, an applicant must be an active “Certified Respiratory Therapist” or an active “Registered Respiratory Therapist” as designated by the National Board for Respiratory Care, or its successor.

Section 3. Section 468.368, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

(Substantial rewording of section. See s. 468.368, F.S., for present text.)

468.368 Exemptions.—This part may not be construed to prevent or restrict the practice, service, or activities of:

(1) Any person licensed in this state by any other law from engaging in the profession or occupation for which he or she is licensed.

(2) Any legally qualified person in the state or another state or territory who is employed by the United States Government or any agency thereof while such person is discharging his or her official duties.

(3) A friend or family member who is providing respiratory care services to an ill person and who does not represent himself or herself to be a respiratory care practitioner or respiratory therapist.

(4) An individual providing respiratory care services in an emergency who does not represent himself or herself as a respiratory care practitioner or respiratory therapist.

(5) Any individual employed to deliver, assemble, set up, or test equipment for use in a home, upon the order of a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 458 or chapter 459. This subsection does not, however, authorize the practice of respiratory care without a license.

(6) Any individual certified or registered as a pulmonary function technologist who is credentialed by the National Board for Respiratory Care for performing cardiopulmonary diagnostic studies.

(7) Any student who is enrolled in an accredited respiratory care program approved by the board, while performing respiratory care as an integral part of a required course.

(8) The delivery of incidental respiratory care to noninstitutionalized persons by surrogate family members who do not represent themselves as registered or certified respiratory care therapists.

(9) Any individual credentialed by the Underseas Hyperbaric Society in hyperbaric medicine or its equivalent as determined by the board, while performing related duties. This subsection does not, however, authorize the practice of respiratory care without a license.

Section 4. Effective January 1, 2005, sections 468.356 and 468.357, Florida Statutes, are repealed.

Section 5. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 17, 2004.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 17, 2004.