

SENATE, No. 3117

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 18, 2018

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires emergency departments to take certain measures concerning palliative care for patients.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning emergency departments and palliative care and
2 supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. The emergency department of a general hospital licensed
8 pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) shall develop and
9 implement a plan to integrate the provision of palliative care
10 services for patients treated in the emergency department for whom
11 palliative care is appropriate. The plan shall include the adoption of
12 a standardized screening tool for use by health care professionals in
13 the emergency department to facilitate the identification of patients
14 who present to the emergency department for acute symptom
15 management, pain relief, or otherwise, who would benefit from
16 palliative care services. The plan shall also include the provision of
17 patient-centered information concerning the benefits of palliative
18 care, the conditions, diagnoses, and disease stage for which
19 palliative care is generally appropriate, and referrals to providers of
20 outpatient palliative care services, when appropriate. The plan shall
21 include consideration of the unique needs of patients with
22 intellectual or developmental disabilities, or behavioral health
23 issues who present to the emergency department and for whom
24 palliative care may be indicated.

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26 2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh
27 month next following enactment.

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30 STATEMENT

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32 This bill requires that emergency departments of general
33 hospitals in the State develop and implement a plan to integrate the
34 provision of palliative care services for patients treated in the
35 emergency department for whom palliative care is appropriate. The
36 plan is to include the adoption of a standardized screening tool for
37 use by health care professionals in the emergency department to
38 facilitate the identification of patients who present to the emergency
39 department who would benefit from palliative care services. The
40 bill requires that an emergency department's plan include
41 consideration of the unique needs of patients with intellectual or
42 developmental disabilities, or behavioral health issues who present
43 to the emergency department and for whom palliative care may be
44 indicated.

45 Palliative care is medical care that attempts to optimize quality
46 of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating the effects of
47 chronic serious illness. Palliative care may involve pain and
48 symptom management, as well as addressing other physical,

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1 emotional, or social needs of the person, including the need for
2 autonomy. Some individuals with advanced illness or end-stage
3 disease may present to an emergency department for relief from
4 acute pain or for symptom management.

5 This bill would take effect on the first day of the seventh month
6 following enactment.