

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 23, 2023

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chairman Zuiderveld, Senators Lee, Bjerke, and Taylor

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Chairman VanOrden, Senators Harris, and Wintrow

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chairman VanOrden** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:01 p.m.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman VanOrden passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Zuiderveld.

24-0000-2201F **Committee Vote: Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses Fee Omnibus.**

DISCUSSION: **Senator Lee** stated she was concerned about the Board of Nursing deleting requirements for continuing education. **Nicki Chopski, Bureau Chief of Health Professions, Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses** explained in their prospective analysis, they found other states did not require continuing education (CE) for a registered nurse (RN) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN), as the requirements for certification were higher than what the rules required. Nurses who returned from a time out of practice were required to complete a refresher program.

Senator Lee asked if there were other professional medical licenses that did not require CE. **Ms. Chopski** replied she did not have that information. **Senator Lee** asked how they knew if a self-employed nurse kept up with changes in the field and other requirements for safe nursing practices. **Ms. Chopski** stated they had not seen any nurses who weren't willing to maintain or keep up on their education.

Senator Lee asked if the removal was because of an audit that discovered the Board of Nursing had not kept track of the CE numbers. **Ms. Chopski** explained that audits were not done across the nation during COVID-19, which was when that audit was completed.

Senator Taylor asked how it would affect a nurse's ability to maintain an A-Class advanced cardiac or pediatric life support certification, and if it was separate from an annual or two year recertification. **Ms. Chopski** stated those were separate certification required by the employer.

TESTIMONY: **Randall Hudspeth**, Executive Director, Idaho Center for Nursing, testified in support of **Docket 24-0000-2201F**. He stated a large number of nurse practitioners in Idaho were licensed before certification was a possibility and before there was a national requirement to maintain certification. Many of those rules were put in place when national standards did not exist, and the national certification requirements now exceeded what the State required.

- MOTION:** **Senator Lee** moved to approve **Docket No. 24-0000-2201F**. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- DOCKET NO. 24-0501-2200F** **Rules of the Board of Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals - Notice of Omnibus Rulemaking (Fee Rule) - Proposed Rule**. **Tim Frost, Deputy Administrator, Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses** explained this omnibus rule chapter was reauthorized and did not have any changes, as it was previously reviewed and approved by the Committee.
- MOTION:** **Senator Taylor** moved to approve **Docket No. 24-0501-2200F**. **Senator Lee** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- PRESENTATION: Suicide Prevention in Idaho.** Mike Sandvig, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Lee Flinn, Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline 988, Stuart Wilder, Idaho Suicide Prevention Action Collective (ISPAC), came before the Committee to present information in honor of Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day (see Attachment 1).
- PRESENTATION: Extended Employment Services. Miren Unsworth, Deputy Director, Department of Health and Welfare** gave an overview of the transition of the Extended Employment Services Program (EES) from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Division) to the Department of Health and Welfare (Department). In the 2022 Legislative session, S 1399 moved the administration of the EES from the Division to the Department. EES were services that assisted individuals with developmental disabilities in maintaining employment or gaining employment skills. This prepared them for community employment within an industry, business setting or community rehabilitation program.
The EES provider agreement was modified slightly during the transition with an understanding that the agreement would need major revisions in the future. The department was working in collaboration with providers to revise the agreement and evaluate rule promulgation (see Attachment 2).
- DISCUSSION:** **Senator Wintrow** asked how much that budget was. **Ms. Unsworth** replied it was just over \$3.5 million, with about 217 individuals in work services and community supported employment.
Senator Bjerke inquired as to why they could not integrate with the system available through the Department. **Ms. Unsworth** stated they could not leverage that system because the service they supplied was not a Medicaid Service.
- ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at that time, **Chairman VanOrden** adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Senator VanOrden
Chair

Michelle Tierney
Secretary