



Legislative Updates

2019 Legislative Focus

We're so early into session that we don't even have bill numbers yet for some of these concepts—Public Health is holding their first meeting this Wednesday. That said, here's something for the interim:

We are planning on raising the AED issue and the Medical Assistant issue in the Public Health committee.

Under the AED bill, a health care provider who operates an automatic external defibrillator (AED) in the ordinary course of his or her employment or practice to render emergency assistance is not civilly liable for any personal injuries that result from the AED's malfunctioning. The bill applies (1) to any health care provider licensed or certified by the Department of Public Health (DPH) and (2) only if the AED's malfunctioning constitutes ordinary negligence. Under current law, any person who operates an AED to give emergency assistance voluntarily, gratuitously, and not in the ordinary course of his or her employment or practice is not civilly liable for any personal injuries that result from his or her acts or omissions that constitute ordinary negligence. The law also provides immunity for negligent acts or omissions by a person or entity in providing or maintaining an AED.

The medical assistant bill would allow medical assistants to administer vaccines. They may do so only if they (1) meet certain certification, education, and training requirements and (2) are acting under the direct supervision, control, and responsibility of a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN). Under the current law, vaccines may only be administered by physicians, nurses, or under certain circumstances, pharmacists (for the influenza vaccine).

We also expect legislation on opioids and legislation that would require health insurers to become more cost effective and affordable for patients, while continuing to cover critical services. Several individual legislators have proposed bills to this effect.

The deadline for the Public Health committee to raise concepts and/or agree to draft bills is February 20. The deadline for bills to be voted out of committee is April 3rd. We expect to see full legislative language as well as bill numbers sometime between now and mid-March.

