



Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 24, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB 218 – Health Occupations – Nursing – Dialysis Technicians – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for House Bill (HB) 218 – Health Occupations – Nursing – Dialysis Technicians. This bill establishes the separate category of certified dialysis technicians to be certified by the State Board of Nursing; repeals the requirement that a dialysis technician be a certified nursing assistant except under certain circumstances; alters the composition of the Board advisory committee; and authorizes the Board to conduct site visits of training programs.

Dialysis Technicians (DTs) serve as primary caregivers for patients undergoing dialysis treatment and those afflicted with acute or chronic renal disease. DTs work directly under and closely with registered nurses (RNs) as members of the patient care team. Through their education and training, DTs learn and understand the scientific principles of dialysis, the process of dialysis treatment, and how to respond to the physical and emotional needs of patients. A DT is responsible for assembling supplies and preparing machinery, testing monitors and machine functions, taking patient vital signs before and after treatment, monitoring patients and equipment, and adjusting blood flow and fluid removal rates.

To be eligible for certification as a dialysis technician in the state of Maryland, an individual must: (1) be certified as a certified nursing assistant (CNA); (2) complete a Board – approved dialysis technician training program; and (3) obtain national certification in accordance with 42 CFR §494.140(e)¹. The national landscape, in comparison, allows a dialysis technician to receive certification from three (3) nationally recognized DT authorities.

The Board believes the intent of HB 218 is to allow DTs to receive education and training specific to their scopes of practice without having to initially obtain CNA certification. The Board is in support of transitioning and streamlining the process of certification for dialysis technicians in accordance with federal requirements.

¹ COMAR 10.39.01.09 – Categories of CNA. <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/10/10.39.01.09.htm>

The Board respectfully submits the following amendments to remove language related to the qualifications of dialysis technicians practicing in a state-owned hospital or facility. This language implies that the Board would need to both enforce hiring practices for state-owned hospitals and discipline individuals for not meeting dual certification. This language additionally creates a regulation that is unfamiliar and nonexistent in current practice. It ties two (2) certifications to a specific facility. This provision moves hiring accountability away from the hospital and onto the Board, which would be out of scope for a regulatory agency. The Board suggests that state-owned hospitals or facilities include in their job descriptions a requirement for applicants to hold active CNA and DT certificates.

Section 8-6A-02. On page 6. Line 19. Remove.

(a) ~~{Except}~~ **[SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION AND EXCEPT]** as...

Section 8-6A-02. On page 4. Lines 14 – 17. Remove.

[(E) AN INDIVIDUAL SHALL BE CERTIFIED BY THE BOARD TO PRACTICE AS A NURSING ASSISTANT AND AS A DIALYSIS TECHNICIAN BEFORE THE INDIVIDUAL MAY PRACTICE AS A DIALYSIS TECHNICIAN IN A STATE-OWNED HOSPITAL OR STATE-OWNED FACILITY]

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for HB 218.

I hope this information is useful. For more information, please contact Iman Farid, Health Policy Analyst, at (410) 585 – 1536 (iman.farid@maryland.gov) or Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) 585 – 1953 (rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Gary N. Hicks
Board President

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.