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Bill Analysis
Legislative Service Commission

Sub. S.B. 147
127th General Assembly
(As Reported by H. Health)

Sens. Faber, Schuring, Grendell, Wagoner, Morano, Seitz, Mumper, Buehrer, Coughlin, Harris, D. Miller, Padgett, Schaffer, Spada, Stivers, Cafaro, Amstutz, Sawyer, Jacobson, Fedor, Smith, Mason, Cates, Wilson

Reps. R. Hagan, DeBose, Strahorn, Letson, B. Williams, Boyd, Slesnick

BILL SUMMARY

- Extends the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's authority to establish a loan repayment program for the recruitment of physicians to include nurses, dentists, optometrists, and psychologists.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Authority to establish health professional recruitment program

(R.C. 5120.55)

Current law--physicians only

Current law authorizes the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to establish a physician recruitment program under which the Department, by means of a contract, agrees to repay all or part of the principal and interest of a government or other educational loan of a physician in exchange for the physician's agreement to provide services to inmates of correctional institutions administered by the Department.¹

¹ Current law (R.C. 5120.55(A)) defines "physician" as an individual who is authorized under R.C. Chapter 4731. to practice medicine and surgery, osteopathic medicine and surgery, or podiatry.

The bill--nurses, dentists, optometrists, and psychologists

The bill extends the Department's authority to establish a loan repayment program to include any or all of the following, which, in addition to physicians, the bill defines as "licensed health professionals":

(1) A dentist who holds a current, valid license issued by the State Dental Board to practice dentistry.

(2) A registered nurse who holds a current, valid license issued by the Ohio Board of Nursing that authorizes the practice of nursing as a registered nurse, regardless of whether the nurse is authorized to practice as an advanced practice nurse.²

(3) A licensed practical nurse who holds a current, valid license issued by the Ohio Board of Nursing that authorizes the practice of nursing as a licensed practical nurse.

(4) An optometrist who holds a current, valid certificate of licensure issued by the State Board of Optometry that authorizes the holder to engage in the practice of optometry.

(5) A psychologist who holds a current, valid license issued by the State Board of Psychology that authorizes the practice of psychology as a licensed psychologist.

Eligibility

Nurses. For a nurse to be eligible to participate in the recruitment program, the nurse must have attended either of the following:

- A nursing school in this country that during the time of attendance was accredited by the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education or the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission.
- A foreign nursing school that during the time of attendance was acknowledged by the World Health Organization (WHO) and verified by a WHO member state as operating within that state's jurisdiction.

Dentists. For a dentist to be eligible to participate in the program, the dentist must have attended a school that was, during the time of attendance, a

² An advanced practice nurse is a certified registered nurse anesthetist, clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse-midwife, or certified nurse practitioner (R.C. 4723.01(O)).

dental college that enabled the dentist to meet the requirements under existing law to be granted a license to practice dentistry in Ohio.

Optometrists. For an optometrist to be eligible to participate in the program, the optometrist must have attended a school of optometry that was, during the time of attendance, approved by the State Board of Optometry.

Psychologists. For a psychologist to be eligible to participate in the program, the psychologist must have attended an educational institution that, during the time of attendance, maintained a specific degree program recognized by the State Board of Psychology as acceptable for fulfilling the requirement in current law (R.C. 4732.10(B)(4)) that an applicant for admission to the examination for a psychologist license have received an earned doctoral degree in psychology, school psychology, or a doctoral degree deemed equivalent by the Board from an educational institution accredited or recognized by national or regional accrediting agencies as maintaining satisfactory standards.

Contracts

The Department must enter into a contract with each licensed health professional it recruits under the program. Each contract must include the scope of services to be provided, the number of hours per week and the number of years of service to be provided, the expenses that were covered by a loan that may be repaid by the Department, and the amount the licensed health professional must pay to the Department as damages should the professional fail to complete the service obligation or comply with other terms of the contract. The lending institution of the licensed health professional, or the Ohio Board of Regents, may be a party to the contract and the contract may include an assignment to the Department of the duty of the professional to repay the principal and interest of the loan.

Rulemaking

If it elects to implement a recruitment program for licensed health professionals, the Department must adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (R.C. Chapter 119.) to establish all of the following:

- Criteria for designating institutions for which licensed health professionals will be recruited.
- Criteria for selecting licensed health professionals for participation in the program.

- Criteria for determining the portion of a loan the Department will agree to repay.
- Criteria for determining reasonable amounts of the expenses covered by a loan to be repaid.
- Procedures for monitoring compliance by licensed health professionals with the terms of their contracts.
- Any other criteria or procedures necessary to implement the program.

HISTORY

| ACTION | DATE |
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| Introduced | 04-19-07 |
| Reported, S. Health, Human Services & Aging | 04-03-08 |
| Passed Senate (33-0) | 04-09-08 |
| Reported, H. Health | 12-16-08 |

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