SENATE, No. 2752

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 30, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO
District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes protocols for treating emergency room patients with dementia.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning dementia and supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

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

1. a. The Commissioner of Health shall establish protocols for employees of hospitals licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) to follow when treating an emergency room patient with dementia. The protocols shall include, at a minimum:

(1) guidelines for identifying a patient who has dementia or a related disorder;

(2) guidelines for communicating with a patient who has dementia or a related disorder;

(3) guidelines for caring for a patient with dementia or a related disorder who has become confused or disoriented;

(4) ensuring hospital staff are informed of which patients have been identified as having dementia or a related disorder;

(5) permitting a patient with dementia or a related disorder to have a family member or caregiver accompany the patient throughout his or her stay in the hospital; and

(6) informing a patient with dementia or a related disorder that the patient is entitled to have a family member or caregiver accompany the patient throughout his or her stay in the hospital.

b. As used in this section, "dementia" means a chronic or persistent disorder of the mental processes due to organic brain disease, for which no curative treatment is available, and marked by memory disorders, changes in personality, deterioration in personal care, impaired reasoning ability, and disorientation.

2. The Commissioner of Health shall, in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), adopt any rules and regulations as the commissioner deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this act.

3. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh month next following the date of enactment, but the Commissioner of Health may take such anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes protocols for treating emergency room patients with dementia.

Under the bill, the Commissioner of Health is to establish protocols for employees of hospitals to follow when treating an emergency room patient with dementia.

The protocols are to include, at a minimum: (1) guidelines for identifying a patient who has dementia or a related disorder; (2) guidelines for communicating with a patient who has dementia or a related disorder; (3) guidelines for caring for a patient with dementia or a related disorder who has become confused or disoriented; (4) ensuring hospital staff are informed of which patients have been identified as having dementia or a related disorder; (5) permitting a patient with dementia or a related disorder to have a family member or caregiver accompany the patient throughout his or her stay in the hospital; and (6) informing a patient with dementia or a related disorder that the patient is entitled to have a family member or caregiver accompany the patient throughout his or her stay in the hospital.

The bill defines "dementia" to mean a chronic or persistent disorder of the mental processes due to organic brain disease, for which no curative treatment is available, and marked by memory disorders, changes in personality, deterioration in personal care, impaired reasoning ability, and disorientation.