

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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SENATE BILL 157

Short Title: Enhance Patient Safety in Operating Rooms. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Bingham, J. Davis (Primary Sponsors); and Pate.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 4, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENHANCE PATIENT SAFETY IN HOSPITAL AND AMBULATORY
SURGICAL FACILITY OPERATING ROOMS BY REQUIRING AT LEAST ONE
CIRCULATING NURSE TO BE PRESENT IN EACH OPERATING ROOM DURING
EACH SURGICAL PROCEDURE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 5 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Part to read:

"Part 3A. Patient Safety.

"§ 131E-89. Circulating nurses required in operating rooms.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Circulating nurse. – A registered nurse licensed to practice under Article 9A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes who is educated and trained in perioperative nursing.

(2) Perioperative nursing. – A specialized area of nursing practice that involves the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of nursing care to patients whose protective reflexes or self-care abilities are potentially compromised during surgical or other invasive procedures.

(b) In order to enhance patient safety and protection, the Commission shall adopt rules to require each hospital licensed under this Article to have a minimum of one circulating nurse physically present in each operating room for the duration of each surgical procedure to (i) coordinate the nursing care and safety needs of patients in the operating room and (ii) support the surgical team as appropriate during surgery.

(c) The Department shall not issue or renew a license under this Article unless the applicant is in compliance with this section."

SECTION 2. Part 4 of Article 6 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 131E-153. Circulating nurses required in operating rooms.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Circulating nurse. – A registered nurse licensed to practice under Article 9A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes who is educated and trained in perioperative nursing.

(2) Perioperative nursing. – A specialized area of nursing practice that involves the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of nursing care to patients whose protective reflexes or self-care abilities are potentially compromised during surgical or other invasive procedures.



1 (b) In order to enhance patient safety and protection, the Commission shall adopt rules
2 to require each ambulatory surgical facility licensed under this Part to have a minimum of one
3 circulating nurse physically present in each operating room for the duration of each surgical
4 procedure to (i) coordinate the nursing care and safety needs of patients in the operating room
5 and (ii) support the surgical team as appropriate during surgery.

6 (c) The Department shall not issue or renew a license under this Part unless the
7 applicant is in compliance with this section."

8 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2015.