

STATE OF NEW YORK

2932

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 23, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. GOTTFRIED, CYMBROWITZ, GALEF, GUNTHER, PAULIN,
PEOPLES-STOKES, ROSENTHAL, COLTON, ABINANTI, JAFFEE, SEPULVEDA --
Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. DINOWITZ, HOOPER, LUPARDO, PERRY,
RIVERA, TITONE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to pain management

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that
2 thousands of New Yorkers suffer needlessly from debilitating pain every
3 year, a condition that can be remedied by the appropriate use of pain
4 medications and other pain management methods. Health care professionals
5 often hesitate to prescribe or administer these medications for fear of
6 reprisal by public health or criminal justice authorities. This legis-
7 lation follows the well-established public policy that the prescribing
8 and administration of pain medications is a legitimate medical inter-
9 vention that can improve the quality of life and avoid needless suffer-
10 ing. It is a well established medical, moral and ethical proposition
11 that it is acceptable to relieve pain by medications, even if the result
12 is or may be decreased consciousness and shortening of life and the
13 indirect hastening of death. However many health care practitioners fear
14 that the legal system may not recognize that principle. While this
15 legislation intends to encourage the appropriate prescribing of pain
16 medications, it does not intend in any way to diminish New York state's
17 strong public policy and laws against the abuse of drugs.

18 § 2. The public health law is amended by adding a new article 28-F to
19 read as follows:

ARTICLE 28-F

PAIN MANAGEMENT

Section 2899-b. Definitions.

2899-c. Limitation on professional discipline or criminal liability.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD02265-01-7

1 2899-d. Acts subject to professional discipline or prosecution.

2 2899-e. Applicability.

3 § 2899-b. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms
4 shall have the following meanings:

5 1. "Accepted guideline" means a peer reviewed clinical practice guide-
6 line for pain management developed, as applicable, by a nationally-re-
7 cognized health care professional or specialty association, or a nation-
8 ally-recognized pain management association.

9 2. "Health care practitioner" means a health care practitioner
10 licensed or certified under title eight of the education law, who is
11 authorized to order, prescribe, administer or dispense pain-relieving
12 medications or other treatment for the relief of pain.

13 3. "Pain-relieving medication" means a prescription drug, including a
14 controlled substance classified as schedule II or other controlled
15 substance, used for pain relief.

16 4. "Professional discipline" means professional discipline under title
17 two-A of article two of this chapter or title eight of the education
18 law.

19 § 2899-c. Limitation on professional discipline or criminal liability.
20 A health care practitioner shall not be subject to professional disci-
21 pline or criminal liability for ordering, prescribing, administering or
22 dispensing pain-relieving medications or other treatments for the
23 purpose of alleviating or controlling pain when practicing within the
24 health care practitioner's lawful scope of practice and in accordance
25 with the reasonable standard of care of the health care practitioner's
26 profession, including an accepted guideline.

27 § 2899-d. Acts subject to professional discipline or prosecution. 1.
28 Nothing in this article shall prohibit professional discipline or crimi-
29 nal prosecution of a health care practitioner for failure to comply with
30 applicable state or federal law, including medical record keeping; homi-
31 cide or promoting, assisting, causing or aiding suicide under the penal
32 law; or unlawful prescribing; or unlawful diversion.

33 2. Nothing in this article shall prohibit professional discipline of a
34 health care practitioner for failure to adequately prescribe, order,
35 administer or dispense pain-relieving medications or other treatments
36 for the relief of pain in accordance with the reasonable standard of
37 care of the health care practitioner's profession, including an accepted
38 guideline.

39 § 2899-e. Applicability. This article shall apply to the treatment of
40 all patients with pain, including dying patients, patients with acute
41 pain and patients with chronic pain, regardless of the patient's prior
42 or current chemical dependency or addiction; provided that a reasonable
43 standard of care of the health care practitioner's profession, including
44 accepted guidelines, may make special provisions relating to prior or
45 current chemical dependency or addiction.

46 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately, provided that subdivision
47 2 of section 2899-d of the public health law, as added by section two of
48 this act, shall take effect on the first of January of the second year
49 after it shall have become a law.