
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGISTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is limited
2 access to mental health care treatment services for residents
3 across the State. The delivery of comprehensive, accessible,
4 and affordable mental health care has been demonstrably enhanced
5 by collaborative practice among licensed clinical psychologists
6 with prescriptive authority and medical doctors in federal
7 facilities and programs and in states that have authorized
8 prescriptive authority for psychologists. The legislature finds
9 that providing limited prescriptive authority to qualified,
10 licensed clinical psychologists, subject to supervision by a
11 licensed medical doctor, could help make comprehensive mental
12 health care more accessible to medically underserved residents
13 of the State. The legislature acknowledges that the Health
14 Resources and Services Administration of the United States
15 Department of Health and Human Services has officially
16 designated much of the State, including isolated rural locations
17 and urban areas with high population densities, as a mental



1 health professional shortage area. This designation highlights
2 the critical need for expansion of available mental health
3 services and development of a corps of mental health
4 professionals to serve the currently unmet needs of Hawaii's
5 population.

6 The legislature has previously authorized prescription
7 privileges for advanced practice registered nurses,
8 optometrists, dentists, podiatrists, and physician assistants.
9 These practitioners have been granted prescriptive authority
10 based on demonstration of specific training, education, and
11 practical competency. Education and training criteria, such as
12 passage of national board examinations and degree and minimum
13 experience requirements, have worked well to assure quality of
14 services. Limitations on authority including the use of
15 approved formularies, limited practice areas, and prohibitions
16 on accepting or distributing drug samples have served to deter
17 abuses in the system and to prevent the inappropriate practice
18 of general medicine. Prescriptive authority for non-physician
19 practitioners with varying types of limitations and supervision
20 requirements has proven manageable and has expanded access to
21 important health care services for patients across the State.



1 Clinical psychologists with appropriate training have been
2 allowed to prescribe medications to active duty military
3 personnel and their families in federal facilities and the
4 federal Indian health service program for years. In recent
5 years, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, New Mexico,
6 and Utah have adopted legislation authorizing prescriptive
7 authority for appropriately trained psychologists without regard
8 to the service setting.

9 Since 2000, psychologists in Hawaii have received
10 psychopharmacological training through the Tripler Army Medical
11 Center psychology training program. These psychologists have
12 actively collaborated with primary care physicians to provide
13 combined therapy and psychopharmacological care to medically
14 underserved patient populations at eleven federally qualified
15 health centers: Bay Clinic, Hana, Molokai, Kauai, Waianae,
16 Kalihi-Palama, Waimanalo, Koolauloa, West Hawaii, Kokua Kalihi
17 Valley, and Waikiki, as well as a Native Hawaiian health care
18 system clinic located in a federally designated medically
19 underserved area on Molokai.

20 The American Psychological Association has developed a
21 model curriculum for a master's degree in psychopharmacology for



1 the education and training of prescribing psychologists.
2 Independent evaluations of the United States Department of
3 Defense psychopharmacological demonstration project by the
4 United States General Accounting Office, now known as the
5 Government Accountability Office, and the American College of
6 Neuropsychopharmacology, as well as the experiences of Idaho,
7 Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, and New Mexico, have demonstrated
8 that appropriately trained clinical psychologists can prescribe
9 psychotropic medications safely and effectively.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 11 (1) Establish a three-year pilot program to allow
12 qualified psychologists to prescribe psychotropic
13 medications for the treatment of mental illness to
14 patients under the psychologist's care at a federally
15 qualified health center located in the county of
16 Kauai; and
- 17 (2) Require a report to the legislature to determine
18 whether the pilot program should be expanded, made
19 permanent statewide, or terminated.

20 PART I



1 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a pilot program to be
2 administered by the state health planning and development
3 agency, in partnership with the board of psychology, to allow
4 clinical psychologists licensed pursuant to chapter 465, Hawaii
5 Revised Statutes, to prescribe psychotropic medications only to
6 patients treated by the psychologist at a federally qualified
7 health center as defined in title 42 United States Code section
8 1396d located in the county of Kauai.

9 (b) A licensed clinical psychologist shall be eligible to
10 apply to participate in the pilot program established pursuant
11 to this Act if the psychologist:

12 (1) Meets the requirements for licensure set forth in
13 section 465-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

14 (2) Completed specialized education and training in
15 preparation for prescriptive practice approved by the
16 American Psychological Association and the board of
17 psychology;

18 (3) Passed the Psychopharmacology Examination for
19 Psychologists or an equivalent national examination
20 relevant to establishing competence for prescriptive
21 practice approved by the board of psychology;



1 (4) Is employed by, including as a contract provider, a
2 federally qualified health center as defined in title
3 42 United States Code section 1396d located in the
4 county of Kauai; and

5 (5) Meets any other requirements established by the board
6 of psychology.

7 (c) The pilot program established pursuant to this Act
8 shall be a three-year program that shall allow participating
9 psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications under a
10 supervising physician.

11 (d) The board of psychology shall adopt rules pursuant to
12 chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to implement the procedures
13 set forth in this Act.

14 (e) The state health planning and development agency shall
15 submit a report to the legislature no later than twenty days
16 prior to the convening of the regular session of 2030. The
17 report shall include a recommendation on whether to:

18 (1) Expand the pilot program to other underserved areas in
19 the State;

20 (2) Make prescriptive authority for qualified
21 psychologists permanent statewide; or



1 (3) Permanently end the pilot program.

2 (f) For the purposes of this Act:

3 "Prescriptive authority" means the authority to prescribe,
4 administer, discontinue, or distribute without charge, drugs or
5 controlled substances recognized in or customarily used in the
6 diagnosis, treatment, and management of individuals with
7 psychiatric, mental, cognitive, nervous, emotional, or
8 behavioral disorders, or other procedures directly related
9 thereto within the scope of practice of psychology in accordance
10 with rules adopted by the board of psychology.

11 "Psychopharmacology" means the use of psychoactive drugs in
12 the treatment and control of mental disorders or psychiatric
13 disease.

14 "Psychotropic medication" means only those agents related
15 to the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders
16 including controlled substances but not including narcotics.

17 "Supervising physician" means a medically trained and
18 licensed physician or psychiatrist who accepts professional
19 responsibility for the provision of psychopharmacology by a
20 psychologist certified to prescribe.

21 PART II



1 SECTION 3. Section 329-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended as follows:

3 1. By adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted
4 and to read:

5 ""Psychologist certified to prescribe" means a person
6 approved by the board of psychology to participate in the pilot
7 program established pursuant to Act _____, Regular Session of
8 2026, but who is not authorized to request, receive, or sign for
9 professional controlled substance samples."

10 2. By amending the definition of "practitioner" to read:

11 ""Practitioner" means:

12 (1) A physician, dentist, veterinarian, scientific
13 investigator, or other person licensed and registered
14 under section 329-32 to distribute, dispense, or
15 conduct research with respect to a controlled
16 substance in the course of professional practice or
17 research in this State;

18 (2) An advanced practice registered nurse with
19 prescriptive authority licensed and registered under
20 section 329-32 to prescribe and administer controlled



1 substances in the course of professional practice in
2 this State;

3 (3) A licensed midwife practicing as a certified midwife
4 registered under section 329-32 to prescribe and
5 administer controlled substances in the course of
6 professional practice in this State; [~~and~~]

7 (4) A psychologist certified to prescribe who is licensed
8 and registered under section 329-32 to prescribe and
9 dispense controlled substances in accordance with the
10 requirements and limitations of the pilot program
11 established pursuant to Act _____, Regular Session of
12 2026; and

13 [~~(4)~~] (5) A pharmacy, hospital, or other institution
14 licensed, registered, or otherwise permitted to
15 distribute, dispense, conduct research with respect to
16 or to administer a controlled substance in the course
17 of professional practice or research in this State."

18 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
19 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

20 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



S.B. NO. 847
S.D. 2

Report Title:

SHPDA; Board of Psychology; Prescriptive Authority; Clinical Psychologists; Pilot Program; Federally Qualified Health Centers; Kauai; Rules; Report

Description:

Establishes a pilot program in the County of Kauai to allow qualified psychologists limited authority to prescribe psychotropic medications to patients under the care of the psychologist in certain circumstances. Requires the Board of Psychology to adopt rules. Requires the State Health Planning and Development Agency to report to the Legislature. (SD2)

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