

ACT 173

S.B. NO. 2948

A Bill for an Act Relating to Public Health Nursing Services.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. In 1923, the department of health established the public health nursing services program to provide communicable disease control, infant welfare services, and nutrition services. Public health nursing services have included home visitation to monitor and follow up on health conditions and to conduct screening and assessments of children for early identification of health and developmental problems and intervention. The public health nursing services program is prominently involved in the provision of services in the prevention and control of communicable diseases, immunization activities, and the immediate response to epidemics and other catastrophic disasters and traumatic emergency events in the community.

Public health nurses have the clinical experience to monitor, anticipate, and respond to public health problems in communities regardless of the disease or threat. The program targets care coordination services to the most vulnerable populations, including special needs infants, toddlers, children with complex medical conditions, the elderly, and other populations who have difficulty accessing the health care system. The public health nursing services program has extensive experience in collaboration, coordination, transition, and family involvement in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations.

The purpose of this Act is to establish statutorily the public health nursing services program and the roles and functions of the program in the delivery of direct clinical nursing services to the people of Hawaii.

SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§321- **Public health nursing services program.** (a) There is established within the department of health a public health nursing services program. At the discretion of the director of health, the program may provide services, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Mobilizing the department’s nursing resources and responding to catastrophic and traumatic emergency events, including natural disasters and biologic outbreaks or exposures;
- (2) Responding to communicable disease, epidemic, and other public health disease outbreaks;
- (3) Providing care coordination services to the most vulnerable populations of special needs infants, toddlers, and children with complex medical conditions, including medically fragile children, as well as the elderly and other populations who have difficulty accessing the health care system;
- (4) Collaborating with the department of education and the Hawaii chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in providing school health services to address the medical and health conditions of public school students that affect their learning;
- (5) Developing collaborative partnerships with individuals, families, communities, and providers to improve the health of families and communities through the assessment of community health needs, the setting of priorities, and policy development;
- (6) Collecting and evaluating data to determine family and community health needs for nursing and health service delivery changes to enhance the quality of life for families; and
- (7) Providing other health care related services as determined appropriate based on community health needs.

(b) Provision of services by the public health nursing services program shall be limited by and subject to the availability of funds.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved July 6, 2004.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.