

One Hundred Sixth Legislature - Second Session - 2020

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB772

Chairperson: Senator Sara Howard

Committee: Health and Human Services

Date of Hearing: January 24, 2020

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Legislative Bill 772 is the result of a successfully completed 407 process, under an application submitted by the Nebraska Academy of Physician Assistants. LB 772 modernizes the statutes regulating the PA scope of practice. These proposed changes will allow PAs and physicians to continue to provide high-quality patient care as part of a healthcare team, while also reducing the administrative burdens or statutory confusion currently experienced by PAs, facility administration, and the physicians with whom they practice.

LB 772 recognizes in statute the collaborative relationship between PAs and physicians, redefining both the definition of a supervising physician and the agreement that must be maintained between the PA and the supervising physician. Under LB 772, PAs are allowed to engage in practice through a collaborative agreement with the supervision of a physician and are allowed to practice as a part of a healthcare team. The bill redefines "supervising physician" in Section 38-2017 to "a licensed physician who supervises a physician assistant under a collaborative agreement" and redefines "supervision" in Section 38-2018 to mean "the ready availability of the supervising physician for consultation and collaboration on the activities of a physician assistant."

One of the most important changes included in LB 772 is that a PA may perform tasks delegated by any physician working in the same physician group as the PA as long as those tasks are delegated by and provided under the supervision of and collaboration with such physician and are medical services for which the PA has been prepared by education, experience, and training and that the physician assistant is competent to perform.

The bill removes the overly prescriptive sections of statute mandating the provisions that must be included in the PA-physician practice agreement, currently outlined in Section 38-2050(2), instead leaving those practice agreement decisions to be made at each practice. LB 772 updates PA prescribing provisions under Section 38-2055, to include non-pharmacological interventions and clarifies that the provisions allowing healthcare providers to furnish medications to patients in certain cases also applies to PAs. Finally, LB 772 changes the governance of the PA Committee, set forth in Section 38-2056.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Matt Williams