

3/27/2015

Sen. Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Capitol, Room 427
Juneau AK 99801

RE: SB 72 – Designated Caregivers for Patients – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Giessel;

Hospitals are currently being penalized for high levels of readmissions within 30 days. This readmission measure is a strong indicator that poor quality is occurring in the end-to-end healthcare delivery process. The end-to-end process includes all the touch points where a consumer encounters problems before admission; a health crises; hospital intake and diagnosis; in care and discharge planning; and at transition to home.

What *can* go wrong, unfortunately, often *does* go wrong. If an individual consumer or their family or care giver is not engaged with useful and actionable information – outcomes are often poor. Imagine if someone does not know how to deliver care: What if a caregiver does not know how to change dressings or other post-care; when and how much medicine a patient must take; what to look for and what to do if something feels or appears to be very wrong?

In fact, these after-discharge care elements are so important that state licensing and accrediting organizations require that education be done, and done well. Doing aftercare well requires education and practice for skill building. This education and skill-development is not done consistently despite many years of requirements. SB 72 shines light on the need for consumer and caregiver support and protection.

SB 72 does not specify treatment or lock hospitals and nursing homes into protocols which will change or go stale. SB 72 simply says that the right thing must be done. The right thing is to engage the consumer, family, and caregiver by designating and educating at discharge.

Thank you for your attention



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