

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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HOUSE BILL 126
Senate Health Care Committee Substitute Adopted 6/27/19

Short Title: Amend Certificate of Need Laws.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 21, 2019

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT AMENDING CERTIFICATE OF NEED LAWS.
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4
5 **PART I. REFORMS EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2019**

6 **SECTION 1.1.** G.S. 131E-176 reads as rewritten:

7 **"§ 131E-176. Definitions.**

8 As used in this Article, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following terms
9 have the meanings specified:

10 ...

11 (2) "Bed capacity" means space used exclusively for inpatient ~~care,~~ care at a
12 health service facility, including space designed or remodeled for licensed
13 inpatient beds even though temporarily not used for such purposes. The
14 number of beds to be counted in any patient room shall be the maximum
15 number for which adequate square footage is provided as established by rules
16 of the Department except that single beds in single rooms are counted even if
17 the room contains inadequate square footage. ~~The term "bed capacity" also~~
18 ~~refers to the number of dialysis stations in kidney disease treatment centers,~~
19 ~~including freestanding dialysis units.~~

20 ...

21 (5) "Change in bed capacity" means (i) any relocation of health service facility
22 beds, or dialysis stations from one licensed facility or campus to another, or
23 (ii) any redistribution of health service facility bed capacity among the
24 categories of health service facility bed as defined in G.S. 131E-176(9c), or
25 (iii) any increase in the number of health service facility ~~beds, or dialysis~~
26 ~~stations in kidney disease treatment centers, including freestanding dialysis~~
27 ~~units.~~beds.

28 ...

29 (7a) "Diagnostic center" means a freestanding facility, program, or provider,
30 including but not limited to, physicians' offices, clinical laboratories,
31 radiology centers, and mobile diagnostic programs, in which the total cost of
32 all the medical diagnostic equipment utilized by the facility which cost ten
33 thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more exceeds ~~five hundred thousand dollars~~
34 ~~(\$500,000).~~ one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000). In
35 determining whether the medical diagnostic equipment in a diagnostic center
36 costs more than ~~five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000),~~ one million five



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1 hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000), the costs of the equipment, studies,
 2 surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction,
 3 installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational
 4 the equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment
 5 shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the
 6 equipment, whichever is greater. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on
 7 September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this
 8 subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the
 9 Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the
 10 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.

11 ...

12 (9a) "Health service" means an organized, interrelated medical, diagnostic,
 13 therapeutic, ~~and/or or~~ rehabilitative ~~activity-activity~~, or any combination of
 14 these, that is integral to the prevention of disease or the clinical management
 15 of a sick, injured, or disabled person. "Health service" does not include
 16 administrative and other activities that are not integral to clinical
 17 ~~management~~ management or any activities performed at a facility that does
 18 not meet the definition of a health service facility.

19 (9b) "Health service facility" means a hospital; long-term care hospital; ~~psychiatric~~
 20 ~~facility~~; rehabilitation facility; nursing home facility; adult care home; ~~kidney~~
 21 ~~disease treatment center, including freestanding hemodialysis units;~~
 22 ~~intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded;~~ home health agency
 23 office; ~~chemical dependency treatment facility;~~ diagnostic center; hospice
 24 office, hospice inpatient facility, hospice residential care facility; and
 25 ambulatory surgical facility. The term "health service facility" does not
 26 include a licensable facility, as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)b.

27 (9c) "Health service facility bed" means a bed licensed for use in a health service
 28 facility in the categories of (i) acute care beds; (ii) ~~psychiatric beds;~~ (iii)
 29 ~~rehabilitation beds;~~ (iv) ~~(iii)~~ nursing home beds; (v) ~~intermediate care beds for~~
 30 ~~the mentally retarded;~~ (vi) ~~chemical dependency treatment beds;~~ (vii) ~~(iv)~~
 31 hospice inpatient facility beds; (viii) ~~(v)~~ hospice residential care facility beds;
 32 (ix) ~~(vi)~~ adult care home beds; and (x) ~~or~~ (vii) long-term care hospital beds.

33 ...

34 (14a) ~~"Intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded"~~ "Intermediate care
 35 facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities" means facilities licensed
 36 pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes for the purpose
 37 of providing health and habilitative services based on the developmental
 38 model and principles of normalization for persons with ~~mental retardation,~~
 39 intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or related conditions.

40 ...

41 (14o) "Major medical equipment" means a single unit or single system of
 42 components with related functions which is used to provide medical and other
 43 health services and which costs more than ~~seven hundred fifty thousand~~
 44 ~~dollars (\$750,000).~~ two million dollars (\$2,000,000). In determining whether
 45 the major medical equipment costs more than ~~seven hundred fifty thousand~~
 46 ~~dollars (\$750,000).~~ two million dollars (\$2,000,000), the costs of the
 47 equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications,
 48 construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and
 49 making operational the major medical equipment shall be included. The
 50 capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market
 51 value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater.

Major medical equipment does not include replacement equipment as defined in this section. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.

...

(16) "New institutional health services" means any of the following:

...

b. Except as otherwise provided in G.S. 131E-184(e), the obligation by any person of a capital expenditure exceeding ~~two~~ four million dollars ~~(\$2,000,000)-(\$4,000,000)~~ to develop or expand a health service or a health service facility, or which relates to the provision of a health service. The cost of any studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, and other activities, including staff effort and consulting and other services, essential to the acquisition, improvement, expansion, or replacement of any plant or equipment with respect to which an expenditure is made shall be included in determining if the expenditure exceeds ~~two~~ four million dollars ~~(\$2,000,000)-(\$4,000,000)~~. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the amount in this sub-subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.

...

d. ~~The~~ Except as otherwise allowed in G.S. 131E-184(j), the offering of dialysis services or home health services by or on behalf of a health service facility if those services were not offered within the previous 12 months by or on behalf of the facility.

...

~~u.~~ The construction, development, establishment, increase in the number, or relocation of an operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room in a licensed health service facility, other than the relocation of an operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room within the same building or on the same grounds or to grounds not separated by more than a public right-of-way adjacent to the grounds where the operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room is currently located.

~~v.~~ The change in designation, in a licensed health service facility, of an operating room to a gastrointestinal endoscopy room or change in designation of a gastrointestinal endoscopy room to an operating room that results in a different number of each type of room than is reflected on the health service facility's license in effect as of January 1, 2005."

SECTION 1.2. G.S. 131E-177 reads as rewritten:

"§ 131E-177. Department of Health and Human Services is designated State Health Planning and Development Agency; powers and duties.

The Department of Health and Human Services is designated as the State Health Planning and Development Agency for the State of North Carolina, and is empowered to exercise the following powers and duties:

(1) To establish standards and criteria or plans required to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Article and to adopt rules pursuant to Chapter 150B of

- 1 the General Statutes, to carry out the purposes and provisions of this
 2 ~~Article;Article.~~
- 3 (2) Adopt, amend, and repeal such rules and regulations, consistent with the laws
 4 of this State, as may be required by the federal government for grants-in-aid
 5 for health service facilities and health planning which may be made available
 6 by the federal government. This section shall be liberally construed in order
 7 that the State and its citizens may benefit from such
 8 ~~grants-in-aid;grants-in-aid.~~
- 9 (3) Define, by rule, procedures for submission of periodic reports by persons or
 10 health service facilities subject to agency review under this ~~Article;Article.~~
- 11 (4) ~~Develop~~ With respect to health service facilities planning, all of the following:
 12 a. Develop policy, criteria, and standards for health service facilities
 13 ~~planning; shall conduct planning.~~
 14 b. Conduct statewide registration and inventories of and make
 15 determinations of need for health service facilities, health services as
 16 specified in G.S. 131E-176(16)f., and equipment as specified in
 17 G.S. 131E-176(16)f1., which shall include consideration of adequate
 18 geographic location of equipment and ~~services; and develop services.~~
 19 c. Develop a State Medical Facilities Plan;Plan, provided, however, that
 20 the State Medical Facilities Plan shall not include policies or need
 21 determinations that limit the number of operating rooms or
 22 gastrointestinal endoscopy rooms.
- 23 (5) Implement, by rule, criteria for project ~~review;review.~~
- 24 (6) Have the power to grant, deny, or withdraw a certificate of need and to impose
 25 such sanctions as are provided for by this ~~Article;Article.~~
- 26 (7) Solicit, accept, hold and administer on behalf of the State any grants or devises
 27 of money, securities or property to the Department for use by the Department
 28 in the administration of this ~~Article; andArticle.~~
- 29 (8) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1.
- 30 (9) Collect fees for submitting applications for certificates of need.
- 31 (10) The authority to review all records in any recording medium of any person or
 32 health service facility subject to agency review under this Article which
 33 pertain to construction and acquisition activities, staffing or costs and charges
 34 for patient care, including but not limited to, construction contracts,
 35 architectural contracts, consultant contracts, purchase orders, cancelled
 36 checks, accounting and financial records, debt instruments, loan and security
 37 agreements, staffing records, utilization statistics and any other records the
 38 Department deems to be reasonably necessary to determine compliance with
 39 this Article.

40 The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall have final decision-making authority with
 41 regard to all functions described in this section."

42 **SECTION 1.3.** G.S. 131E-183(a)(1) reads as rewritten:

43 "(1) The proposed project shall be consistent with applicable policies and need
 44 determinations in the State Medical Facilities Plan, the need determination of
 45 which constitutes a determinative limitation on the provision of any health
 46 service, health service facility, health service facility beds, ~~dialysis stations,~~
 47 operating rooms, or home health offices that may be approved."

48 **SECTION 1.4.** G.S. 131E-184(c) reads as rewritten:

49 "(c) The Department shall exempt from certificate of need review any conversion of
 50 existing acute care beds to psychiatric ~~beds provided;beds.~~

- 1 (1) ~~The hospital proposing the conversion has executed a contract with the~~
2 ~~Department's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and~~
3 ~~Substance Abuse Services and/or one or more of the Area Mental Health,~~
4 ~~Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Authorities to provide~~
5 ~~psychiatric beds to patients referred by the contracting agency or agencies;~~
6 ~~and~~
7 (2) ~~The total number of beds to be converted shall not be more than twice the~~
8 ~~number of beds for which the contract pursuant to subdivision (1) of this~~
9 ~~subsection shall provide."~~

10 **SECTION 1.5.** G.S. 131E-184(e)(1) reads as rewritten:

11 "(1) The proposed capital expenditure would:

- 12 a. Be used solely for the purpose of renovating, replacing on the same
13 site, or expanding an existing:
14 1. Nursing home facility, or
15 2. Adult care home ~~facility, or facility.~~
16 3. ~~Intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded; and~~
17 b. Not result in a change in bed capacity, as defined in G.S. 131E-176(5),
18 or the addition of a health service facility or any other new institutional
19 health service other than that allowed in G.S. 131E-176(16)b."

20 **SECTION 1.6.(a)** G.S. 131E-184 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

21 "(i) The Department shall exempt from certificate of need review the development,
22 acquisition, construction, expansion, or replacement of a health service or health service facility
23 that obtained certificate of need approval prior to October 1, 2019, as a kidney dialysis treatment
24 center, including freestanding hemodialysis units; intermediate care facility for individuals with
25 intellectual disabilities; psychiatric facility; chemical dependency treatment facility; or any other
26 licensable facility, as defined in G.S. 122C-3(14)b.

27 (j) The Department shall exempt from certificate of need review the establishment of a
28 home health agency by a continuing care retirement community licensed under Article 64 of
29 Chapter 58 of the General Statutes to provide home health services to one or more residents of a
30 continuing care retirement community who have entered into a contract with the continuing care
31 retirement community to receive continuing care services with lodging. A continuing care
32 retirement community that seeks to provide home health services to individuals who do not reside
33 at the continuing care retirement community pursuant to a contract to receive continuing care
34 services with lodging shall be required to obtain a certificate of need as a home health agency
35 prior to developing or offering home health services to any individual not a resident of the
36 continuing care retirement community under a contract to receive continuing care services with
37 lodging. As used in this subsection, the terms "continuing care" and "lodging" are as defined in
38 G.S. 58-64-1. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to exempt from the State's home
39 health agency licensure and certification requirements a continuing care retirement community
40 that has been exempted from certificate of need review for the provision of home health services
41 to one or more residents pursuant to this subsection."

42 **SECTION 1.6.(b)** G.S. 131E-184(j), as enacted by this section, applies to continuing
43 care retirement communities engaged in the direct provision of home health services on or after
44 October 1, 2019.

45 **SECTION 1.7.** G.S. 131E-186(a) reads as rewritten:

46 "(a) Within the prescribed time limits in G.S. 131E-185, the Department shall issue a
47 decision to "approve," "approve with conditions," or "deny," an application for a new institutional
48 health service. Approvals involving new or expanded nursing care ~~or intermediate care for the~~
49 ~~mentally retarded bed capacity~~ shall include a condition that specifies the earliest possible date
50 the new institutional health service may be certified for participation in the Medicaid program.
51 The date shall be set far enough in advance to allow the Department to identify funds to pay for

1 care in the new or expanded facility in its existing Medicaid budget or to include these funds in
 2 its State Medicaid budget request for the year in which Medicaid certification is expected."

3 **SECTION 1.8.** G.S. 131E-189 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

4 "(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a certificate of need for the
 5 construction of a health service facility expires if the holder of the certificate of need fails to
 6 initiate construction of the project authorized by the certificate of need within the following time
 7 frames:

8 (1) For a project that costs over fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000), the holder of
 9 the certificate of need shall initiate construction of the project authorized by
 10 the certificate of need within four years after the date the Department's
 11 decision to approve the certificate of need for that project becomes final.

12 (2) For a project that costs fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) or less, the holder
 13 of the certificate of need shall initiate construction of the project authorized
 14 by the certificate of need within two years after the date the Department's
 15 decision to approve the certificate of need for that project becomes final."

16 **SECTION 1.9.** G.S. 131E-175(11) and (12) are repealed.

17 **SECTION 1.10.** This Part becomes effective October 1, 2019.

18
 19 **PART II. REFORMS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2020**

20 **SECTION 2.1.** G.S. 131E-147 reads as rewritten:

21 "**§ 131E-147. Licensure requirement.**

22 ...

23 (c1) All initial applications and renewal applications shall require the applicant to state the
 24 number of procedure rooms on, and the number of procedures performed at, the premises named
 25 in the application.

26"

27 **SECTION 2.2.** G.S. 131E-176(16), as amended by this act, reads as rewritten:

28 "(16) "New institutional health services" means any of the following:

29 ...

30 ~~f. The conversion of a specialty ambulatory surgical program to a~~
 31 ~~multispecialty ambulatory surgical program or the addition of a~~
 32 ~~specialty to a specialty ambulatory surgical program.~~

33"

34 **SECTION 2.3.** This Part becomes effective January 1, 2020.

35
 36 **PART III. SEVERABILITY**

37 **SECTION 3.1.** If any part of this act is declared unconstitutional or invalid by the
 38 courts, it does not affect the validity of this act as a whole or any part other than the part declared
 39 to be unconstitutional or invalid.

40 **SECTION 3.2.** This Part is effective when it becomes law.