

## CHAPTER 44

**AN ACT** concerning prevention of pressure ulcers in nursing homes and supplementing P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.).

**BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.26:2H-12.54 Findings, declarations relative to pressure ulcers in nursing home residents.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. Pressure ulcers, or bedsores, are a serious public health concern, and elderly persons, who comprise the majority of residents in nursing homes in this State, are most at risk of experiencing pressure ulcers;

b. There are four stages of pressure ulcers, ranging from Stage 1 (skin still intact), to Stage 4 (loss of tissue and exposed muscle, tendon, and bone);

c. Persons with pressure ulcers can experience severe pain, as well as complications from infection;

d. According to 2007 survey data reported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, nursing home residents in New Jersey had pressure ulcer rates that were higher than the national overall average. New Jersey ranked fourth highest among all states and the District of Columbia in the percentage of nursing home residents with pressure ulcers and fifth highest in the percentage of nursing home residents with pressure ulcers at the time of admission to the facility; and

e. The use of pressure redistribution mattresses is widely recognized as one of the more effective ways to prevent and treat pressure ulcers.

C.26:2H-12.55 Replacement of mattresses with pressure redistribution mattresses.

2. a. Beginning one year after the effective date of this act, when a nursing home replaces a mattress for use by a nursing home resident, the nursing home shall replace the mattress with a pressure redistribution mattress that is designed to address, at a minimum, Stage 1 pressure ulcers.

b. No later than three years after the effective date of this act, a nursing home shall replace all mattresses used by its nursing home residents with pressure redistribution mattresses that are designed to address, at a minimum, Stage 1 pressure ulcers.

3. This act shall take effect on the 60th day after enactment.

Approved April 23, 2009.