

CHAPTER 421

AN ACT concerning emergency departments and palliative care and supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

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

C.26:2H-5s Provision of palliative care services for patients treated in the emergency department.

1. The emergency department of a general hospital licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) shall develop and implement a plan to integrate the provision of palliative care services for patients treated in the emergency department for whom palliative care is appropriate. The plan shall include:

(1) the adoption of a standardized screening tool , as recommended by the Department of Health, for use by health care professionals in the emergency department to facilitate the identification of patients who present to the emergency department for acute symptom management, pain relief, or otherwise, who would benefit from palliative care services;

(2) the provision of patient-centered information , as developed by the Department of Health, concerning the benefits of palliative care, the conditions, diagnoses, and disease stage for which palliative care is generally appropriate, and referrals to providers of outpatient palliative care services, when appropriate; and

(3) consideration of the unique needs of patients with intellectual or developmental disabilities or behavioral health issues who present to the emergency department and for whom palliative care may be indicated.

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh month next following enactment, except that the Commissioner of Health may take such anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act.

Approved January 21, 2020.