

SENATE BILL NO. 9

INTRODUCED BY R. WEBB

BY REQUEST OF THE CHILDREN, FAMILIES, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO REPORT CERTAIN INFORMATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT; PROVIDING IMMUNITY; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 50-16-530, 50-16-531, 50-16-805, AND 50-16-817, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 50-16-530, MCA, is amended to read:

"50-16-530. Disclosure without patient's authorization. A health care provider may disclose health care information about a patient without the patient's authorization if the disclosure is:

(1) directory information, unless the patient has instructed the health care provider not to make the disclosure;

(2) to federal, state, or local public health authorities; to the extent the health care provider is required by law to report health care information or when needed to protect the public health;

(3) to federal, state, or local law enforcement authorities to the extent required by law;

(4) to a law enforcement officer about the general physical condition of a patient being treated in a health care facility if the patient was injured on a public roadway or was injured by the possible criminal act of another;

(5) in response to a request of the office of victims services for information under 53-9-104(2)(b);

(6) pursuant to compulsory process in accordance with 50-16-535 and 50-16-536;

(7) pursuant to 50-16-712; or

(8) to federal, state, or local law enforcement authorities to:

(a) notify the authorities of an activity that the provider in good faith believes constitutes evidence of criminal conduct that occurred on the provider's premises; or

(b) prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public; or

~~(8)~~(9) to the state medical examiner or a county coroner for use in determining cause of death. The information is required to be held confidential as provided by law."

1 **Section 2.** Section 50-16-531, MCA, is amended to read:

2 **"50-16-531. Immunity of health care providers pursuant to written authorization -- form required.**

3 (1) (a) A health care provider who discloses health care information as allowed under 50-16-530(8) is immune
4 from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise result from the disclosure if the disclosure was made in
5 good faith and in accordance with the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996
6 and 45 CFR, part 164.

7 (b) The civil immunity provisions of this subsection (1) do not apply to a person employed by or an entity
8 operated by the state or a political subdivision of the state.

9 (2) A health care provider who discloses health care information within the possession of the provider,
10 including health care information from another provider, is immune from any civil cause of action by the patient
11 or the patient's heirs or successors in interest that is based upon delivery to the patient or the patient's designee
12 of health care information concerning the patient that is contained in the health care provider's patient file if the
13 information is disclosed in accordance with a written authorization using the following language:

14 "All health care information in your possession, whether generated by you or by any other source, may
15 be released to me or to(named person) for(purpose of the disclosure). This release is subject
16 to revocation at any time. The revocation is effective from the time it is communicated to the health care provider.
17 If not revoked, the release terminates in accordance with 50-16-527.

18
19 (Signature of patient)"
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21 **Section 3.** Section 50-16-805, MCA, is amended to read:

22 **"50-16-805. Disclosure of information allowed for certain purposes.** (1) To the extent provided in
23 39-71-604 and 50-16-527, a signed claim for workers' compensation or occupational disease benefits authorizes
24 disclosure to the workers' compensation insurer, as defined in 39-71-116, by the health care provider.

25 (2) A health care provider may disclose health care information about an individual for law enforcement
26 purposes if the disclosure is to:

- 27 (a) federal, state, or local law enforcement authorities to the extent required by law; ~~or~~
- 28 (b) a law enforcement officer about the general physical condition of a patient being treated in a health
29 care facility if the patient was injured by the possible criminal act of another; or
- 30 (c) federal, state, or local law enforcement authorities to:

1 (i) notify the authorities of an activity that the provider in good faith believes constitutes evidence of
 2 criminal conduct that occurred on the provider's premises; or

3 (ii) prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.

4 (3) A health care provider may disclose health care information to a fetal, infant, child, and maternal
 5 mortality review team for the purposes of 50-19-402 [and to the Montana suicide review team for the purposes
 6 of 53-21-1105 through 53-21-1110]. (Bracketed language terminates June 30, 2016--sec. 16, Ch. 353, L. 2013.)"

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8 **Section 4.** Section 50-16-817, MCA, is amended to read:

9 **"50-16-817. Civil remedies -- immunity.** (1) A Except as provided in subsection (8), a person aggrieved
 10 by a violation of this part may maintain an action for relief as provided in this section.

11 (2) The court may order the health care provider or other person to comply with this part and may order
 12 any other appropriate relief.

13 (3) A disciplinary or punitive action may not be taken against a health care provider or the provider's
 14 employee or agent who brings evidence of a violation of this part to the attention of the patient or an appropriate
 15 authority.

16 (4) If the court determines that there is a violation of this part, the aggrieved person is entitled to recover
 17 damages for pecuniary losses sustained as a result of the violation and, in addition, if the violation results from
 18 willful or grossly negligent conduct, the aggrieved person may recover not in excess of \$5,000, exclusive of any
 19 pecuniary loss.

20 (5) If a plaintiff prevails, the court may assess reasonable attorney fees and all other expenses
 21 reasonably incurred in the litigation.

22 (6) An action under this part is barred unless the action is commenced within 3 years after the cause of
 23 action accrues.

24 (7) A health care provider who relies in good faith upon certification pursuant to 50-16-812 is considered
 25 to have received reasonable assurances and is not liable for disclosures made in reliance on that certification.

26 (8) (a) A health care provider who discloses health care information as allowed under 50-16-805(2)(c)
 27 is immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise result from the disclosure if the disclosure was
 28 made in good faith and in accordance with the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability
 29 Act of 1996 and 45 CFR, part 164.

30 (b) The civil immunity provisions of this subsection (8) do not apply to a person employed by or an entity

1 operated by the state or a political subdivision of the state."

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