

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 416

PRINTER NO. 872

AMOUNT

See Fiscal Impact

FUND

Professional Licensure Augmentation
Account

DATE INTRODUCED

March 12, 2021

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Gordner

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 416 amends the Professional Nursing Law to provide for certified registered nurse anesthetist designation.

Senate Bill 416 establishes the certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) designation in the Commonwealth. The legislation grants an individual who holds a licensure to practice professional nursing and who meets the requirements of this act the right to use the CRNA designation exclusively.

A CRNA receives certification if the following requirements are met:

- Files an application and fee with the State Board of Nursing (board);
- Holds a master's degree, doctoral degree or post-master's certification from a board-approved educational program in nurse anesthesia;
- Holds a current national certification as a CRNA from a board-recognized national certification organization which required passing of a national certifying examination in nurse anesthesia; and
- Meets all other board requirements to practice as a CRNA.

A registered nurse who does not have a graduate degree qualifies for certification as a CRNA if the nurse meets the educational requirements for CRNAs that were in effect at the time the nurse completed a nurse anesthesia educational program and submits evidence of recertification as a CRNA from a board-recognized national certification organization, which required passing of a national certifying examination in nurse anesthesia.

As a condition of biennial certification renewal, a CRNA must:

- Verify that the nurse holds current recertification from a board-recognized national certification organization which required passing of a national certifying examination in nurse anesthesia;
- Submit a renewal application and fee to the board; and
- Complete at least 30 hours of board-approved continuing education during the two-year period prior to certification renewal.

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Senate Bill 416 authorizes the board to issue a certification to a CRNA who has completed a course of study considered by the board to be equivalent to the requirements of this act at the time such course was completed or who is licensed or certified by another state, territory or possession of the United States or foreign country as deemed equivalent to Pennsylvania's certification requirements. A CRNA must maintain professional liability coverage as required for a nonparticipating health care provider under the Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error ("Mcare") Act.

The legislation grants a CRNA the authority to perform anesthesia services in cooperation with a physician, podiatrist or dentist involved in a procedure for which anesthesia care is being provided if the anesthesia services are performed under the overall direction of:

- A physician licensed by the State Board of Medicine or the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine who has completed an accredited residency training program in anesthesiology;
- A physician licensed by the State Board of Medicine or the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine who is performing the procedure for which the CRNA is performing anesthesia services;
- A podiatrist licensed by the State Board of Podiatry who is performing the procedure for which the CRNA is performing anesthesia services; or
- A dentist licensed by the State Board of Dentistry and permitted by the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L. 216, No. 76), known as "The Dental Law" or the State Board of Dentistry to administer, supervise or direct administration of anesthesia.

Senate Bill 416 shall not be construed to:

- Prohibit a CRNA who would otherwise require direction from providing brief periods of care in the event of an emergency that temporarily prevents or interferes with overall direction;
- Restrict the authority of a health care facility to provide for additional oversight requirements for a CRNA practicing within the facility; or
- Limit or prohibit a CRNA from engaging in those activities which normally constitute the practice of nursing.

Senate Bill 416 requires the board to promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this legislation within 18 months of the effective date.

The act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 416 will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

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There are an estimated 3,700 CRNAs and students that practice and study in Pennsylvania. Given the potential number of CRNAs, additional staff may be required to administer the requirements outlined in Senate Bill 416. In order to implement the legislation, the board would have to create applications for the CRNAs and issue and renew certifications for CRNAs. The application process would be funded through application and renewal fees.