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2005 SENATE BILL 544

February 1, 2006 - Introduced by Senators Robson, Roessler, Brown, Coggs, Miller, Risser, Taylor and Wirch, cosponsored by Representatives Seidel, Benedict, Berceau, Fields, Gunderson, Hahn, Lehman, McCormick, Sheridan and Young. Referred to Committee on Health, Children, Families, Aging and Long Term Care.

AN ACT to amend 146.89 (1) of the statutes; relating to: expanding types of volunteer health care providers to include pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program (VHCPP) in current law, health care services of a volunteer health care provider and a nonprofit agency whose joint application is approved by the Department of Administration must be provided without charge primarily to low-income persons who are uninsured and, except for the provision of certain dental and dental hygiene services to Medical Assistance (MA) recipients, are not recipients of MA or Medicare Program benefits. Volunteer health care providers include physicians, dentists, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nurse-midwives, optometrists, and physician assistants. These volunteers are, for the provision of services under the VHCPP, state agents of the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS).

Under current law, for a person with status as a state agent of DHFS, the attorney general may, if requested by the secretary of health and family services, appear and defend the person in any civil action or other matter brought before a court as the result of an act committed in the lawful course of the agent's duties. In addition, a civil action or civil proceeding against a state agent for an act committed in the course of the discharge of the agent's duties may not be brought unless the claimant serves on the attorney general written notice within 120 days of the event that caused injury, damage, or death. Lastly, judgments in excess of any insurance

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applicable to the state agent defendant must be paid by the state, and a governmental unit need not provide or pay for legal representation if applicable insurance provides the representation.

This bill expands the types of volunteer health care providers who may provide services under the VHCPP and have status as state agents of DHFS to include licensed pharmacists and persons who perform functions described for pharmacy technicians in rules promulgated by the Pharmacy Examining Board.

For further information see the **state** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. 146.89 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

146.89 (1) In this section, "volunteer health care provider" means an individual who is licensed as a physician under ch. 448, dentist or dental hygienist under ch. 447, registered nurse, practical nurse, or nurse-midwife under ch. 441, optometrist under ch. 449, or physician assistant under ch. 448, or pharmacist under ch. 450, who is certified as a dietitian under subch. V of ch. 448, or who performs functions described for pharmacy technicians in rules promulgated by the pharmacy examining board, and who receives no income from the practice of that health care profession or who receives no income from the practice of that health care profession when providing services at the nonprofit agency specified under sub. (3).

11 (END)