



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2011 Wisconsin Act 161
[2011 Senate Bill 421]

**Medically Related Acts by
Physician Assistants**

2011 Wisconsin Act 161 grants physician assistants the authority to perform the following acts, which physicians and certain other types of health care professionals are currently authorized to perform:

- Have private and unrestricted communication between nursing home residents who are their patients.
- Document certain activities that are permitted or contraindicated for a nursing home resident.
- Certify the illness or disability of a person who is disabled and who appears before the zoning board of appeals.
- Provide a written excuse for a child's absence from school.
- Provide information to the Department of Transportation, without informed consent, regarding a person's ability to exercise control over a motor vehicle; and perform examinations of driver's license applicants to evaluate the applicant's physical or mental ability to drive.
- Perform a number of actions (such as, public health department notifications and required health examinations) regarding communicable diseases under ch. 252, Stats.
- Provide a written referral for a person to practice physical therapy.

Act 161 includes in the definition of "home health services," items and services furnished to an individual who is under care of a physician assistant.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.

Act 161 also provides that information communicated to a physician assistant, in an effort to unlawfully procure a prescription drug, is not privileged communication. In addition, the Act provides the enforcement of prescription drug laws that apply to physician assistants is the responsibility of the Department of Safety and Professional Services and the Medical Examining Board.

Effective date: April 12, 2012.

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April 24, 2012

LR:jb;ksm