

ONE HUNDRED SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2012
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB831

Hearing Date: Thursday January 19, 2012
Committee On: Health and Human Services
Introducer: Howard
One Liner: Adopt the Genetic Counseling Practice Act

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File

Vote Results:

Aye:	4	Senators Gloor, Howard, Krist, Campbell
Nay:	1	Senator Bloomfield
Absent:		
Present Not Voting:	2	Senators Lambert, Cook

Proponents:

Senator Gwen Howard
Bronson Riley
Rebecca Rae Anderson
Elizabeth Conover

Representing:

District #9
Nebraska Association of Genetic Counselors
Self
Nebraska Association of Genetic Counselors

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

The bill adopts the Genetic Counseling Practice Act to license genetic counselors in Nebraska.

Sections three through 14 are the definitions under the Act.

The state board for the Genetic Counseling Practice Act will be the Board of Medicine and Surgery.

The bill provides that the scope of practice of a genetic counselor is:

- (1) Obtaining and evaluating individual, family, and medical histories to determine genetic risk for genetic or medical conditions and diseases in a patient, his or her offspring, and other family members;
- (2) Discussing features, natural history, means of diagnosis, genetic and environmental factors, and management of risk for genetic or medical conditions and diseases;
- (3) Identifying and coordinating of genetic laboratory tests and other diagnostic studies as appropriate for the genetic assessment;
- (4) Integrating genetic laboratory test results and other diagnostic studies with personal and family medical history to assess and communicate risk factors for genetic or medical conditions and diseases;
- (5) Explaining the clinical implications of genetic laboratory tests and other diagnostic studies and their results;
- (6) Evaluating the client's, or family's, responses to genetic or medical conditions identified by the genetic assessment, or risk of recurrence, and providing client-centered counseling and anticipatory guidance;
- (7) Identifying and utilizing community resources that provide medical, educational, financial, and psychosocial support and advocacy; and

(8) Providing written documentation of medical, genetic, and counseling information for families and health care professionals.

The Genetic Counseling Practice Act does not apply to:

- (1) An individual licensed under the Uniform Credentialing Act to practice a profession other than genetic counseling when acting within the scope of his or her profession, except he or she shall not hold themselves out to the public as a genetic counselor;
- (2) An individual employed by the U.S. Government who provides genetic counseling solely under the direction and control of the agency by which he or she is employed;
- (3) A genetic counseling intern under the direct supervision of a genetic counselor; or
- (4) An individual certified by the national genetic counseling board, or the national medical genetics board, not permanently living in the state, who is providing consulting for a period of two months or less.

The bill outlines the process for applying for licensure for individuals practicing genetic counseling in Nebraska before January 1, 2013 to include: ten years experience, a masters degree or higher in genetics or related field, and never failed a certification exams; three letters of recommendation as specified by the bill; and documentation of continuing education within the five years preceding application. An applicant for licensure as a genetic counselor shall provide satisfactory evidence that he or she is certified as a genetic counselor by either the national genetic counseling board or the national medical genetics board.

LB 831 provides for a provisional license to practice genetic counseling, as specified, while the individual seeks certification. The bill allows for licensure based on another jurisdiction by individuals who meet the requirements of the Genetic Counseling Practice Act, or substantially equivalent, as determined by the department with the recommendation of the state board. On or after January 1, 2013 no individual shall hold himself or herself out as a genetic counselor unless he or she is licensed in accordance with the Genetic Counseling Practice Act.

Kathy Campbell, Chairperson