



Arkansas House Newsletter

April 30, 2021

2021 Public Health Legislation



STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Public Health Legislation

Act 530

Creates the Arkansas Health & Opportunity for Me Program known as ARHOME.

ARHOME is a new version of the Medicaid expansion program that would will to offer low-income families private insurance, with incentives for taking advantage of career & work opportunities, education & skill development, & health or other activities that will lead to long-term economic independence.

In addition, ARHOME would offer the following targeted plans:

- RuralLife360 – For Arkansans living in rural areas.
- MaternalLife360 – For pregnant women & families.
- SuccessLife360 – For veterans, those who were incarcerated, & those once in foster care.

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Act 757-This bill creates the Licensed Practical Nurse Pathway Pilot Program. It states that the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Division of Higher Education, shall establish and implement a program in which high school students may enroll in undergraduate courses required to obtain a diploma or certificate of completion as a licensed practical nurse by the date on which the public

school student graduates or within a reasonable frame of time after the public school student graduates.

Act 802 -This bill will create an Arkansas Legislative Study on Mental and Behavioral Health.

Act 640 -This bill requires the Arkansas Department of Health to ensure that the Suicide Prevention Hotline employs individuals who have experience working with veterans or are veterans.

Act 626 prohibits healthcare professionals from providing gender transition procedures to any individual under 18 years of age.

Act 449 -This bill allows a certified registered nurse anesthetist to operate in consultation with, but not necessarily in the presence of, a licensed physician.

Act 412 -This bill authorizes full independent practice authority for certified nurse practitioners who meet specific requirements. Currently, nurse practitioners have to practice in a collaborative agreement with physicians.

Act 837-This bill creates “Lila’s Law,” which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities regarding access to organ transplantation.

Act 408 -This bill authorizes pharmacists to provide access to oral contraceptives. The bill also includes a provision for pharmacists to refer a patient to a primary care or women’s health provider if she has not been seen by a physician in the previous six months.

Act 311-This bill creates the No Patient Left Alone Act. The bill outlines visitation rights for hospital patients, including children, patients with disabilities, hospice care, long-term care patients, and members of the clergy.

Act 309 -This bill would ban abortions except those performed to protect the life and health of the mother.

Act 391-This bill creates the Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Advisory Council. The council will research the needs and services available to the nearly 50,000 Arkansans living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

Act 607-This bill grants full practice authority to certified nurse midwives.

Act 569 -This bill states the Arkansas Medicaid Program shall recognize an advanced practice registered nurse for all purposes as a primary care provider authorized to carry out the duties of a primary care case manager.

Act 827-This bill authorizes emergency medical services personnel to administer certain emergency prescription medications to a patient with a health condition that requires specialized treatment.

Act 97-This bill regulates step therapy protocols.

Health benefit plans are increasingly making use of step therapy, which often require patients to try one or more prescription drugs before coverage is provided for a drug selected by the healthcare provider. SB99 does not ban the use of step therapy but instead requires insurance providers to set reasonable timelines for requests and appeals.

Act 627-This bill would ensure that Arkansas Medicaid reimbursements for telemedicine of certain behavioral and mental health services continue after the health emergency ends.

Act 226 - This is a bill to establish Simon's Law, named after a Missouri child whose death led to similar laws being passed in several states. It would require health care professionals to obtain at least one parent's consent before placing a "do not resuscitate order" for a child.

Act 225 -This bill will allow UAMS to create a breast milk bank and establish an account to fund the program.

Act 90 -This bill requires that any woman seeking an abortion be notified of the availability of medical, welfare, and private assistance programs. It instructs the Department of Health to establish a hotline for pregnant women seeking an abortion in Arkansas to call in order to receive a resource access assistance offer. If enacted, this legislation would take effect January 1, 2023.