

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Olympia, Washington 98504

March 6, 2014

Hospital Administrators:

The Washington State Department of Health recently amended two rules related to hospitals:

- WAC 246-320-141 patient rights and organizational ethics rule (hospital licensing); and
- WAC 246-310-010 definitions (certificate of need).

We previously sent out communications about the department's expectations around the patient rights and organizational ethics rule. The purpose of this communication is to make sure hospital administrators understand the department's expectations around the impact of the rule clarifying the definition of sale, purchase, or lease.

We have heard concerns that contracting for hospital administrative services will now be subject to certificate of need review, including human resources, information services or other administrative services. This is not true. In these types of contracts, the contracting party retains control over the contractor, directing the work and terminating the contract if dissatisfied with their work.

The rules instead focus on a change in control of the hospital or part of the hospital. When such a change may occur, the department review involves the examination of specific factors, including:

- The need for the healthcare services for the population being served.
- How the healthcare services will be delivered (structure).
- The financial feasibility of the proposal.
- The process of care in the proposal.

As stated in earlier communications, by March 25, 2014 all hospitals will need to send their policies on admission, non-discrimination, end-of-life and reproductive health to HospitalPolicies@doh.wa.gov, and to post them on their hospital website. Email the zipped policies in PDF format.

If you have questions about the certificate of need definition, contact Janis Sigman, Program Manager of Certificate of Need at 360-236-2956 or janis.sigman@doh.wa.gov. For questions about hospital policies, contact Lisa Hodgson Office Director of Health Professions and Facilities at 360-236-2927 or lisa.hodgson@doh.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Steven Saxe, FACHE
Director
Office of Community Health Systems