

2021 -- H 5547

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - PATIENT VISITATION RIGHTS

Introduced By: Representatives Nardone, Chippendale, and Hull

Date Introduced: February 12, 2021

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 23-17 of the General Laws entitled "Licensing of Health-Care  
2 Facilities" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **23-17-19.4. Patient's right to access to a designated support person.**

4 (a) Notwithstanding any law, ordinance, rule, regulation or executive order to the contrary,  
5 all health care facility patients, residential care and living facility residents, as defined in § 23-17.4-  
6 2, community group home residents, as defined in § 40.1-24.5-1 and veterans' homes residents  
7 governed by chapter 24 of title 30, shall have a fundamental right to have bedside companionship  
8 and personal health care advocacy during their convalescence and residence. They are entitled to  
9 receive the guidance of a designated support person to assist them with their treatment,  
10 interpretation of medical plans or procedures, or any other medical issues, as well as to provide  
11 them with needed companionship and help.

12 (b) For purposes of this section, a "designated support person" means an individual selected  
13 by the patient to furnish them with physical and emotional assistance during their presence in health  
14 care and assisted living facilities, nursing, group or veterans' homes.

15 (c) The designated support person shall have regular and sustained physical access to the  
16 patient that chose them, subject to reasonably promulgated rules and regulations, which may limit  
17 the nature and extent of their access, in light of public safety concerns, but shall not totally exclude  
18 their presence.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T  
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - PATIENT VISITATION RIGHTS

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1           This act would entitle all residents of health care and assisted living facilities, nursing  
2 homes, group homes and veterans' homes, to designate a person to provide them with  
3 companionship, personal health care guidance and advocacy.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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