

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL 730

Short Title: The No Patient Left Alone Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Daniel, Perry, and Krawiec (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 14, 2020

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN UNRESTRICTED HOSPITAL PATIENT RIGHTS
3 THAT WILL NOT BE IMPACTED DURING DECLARED DISASTERS AND
4 EMERGENCIES; AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
5 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE
6 REGULATION, TO DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE TO HOSPITALS FREE
7 INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS EXPLAINING THESE RIGHTS.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as "The No Patient Left Alone Act."

10 SECTION 2. Article 5 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended by adding
11 a new section to read:

12 "**§ 131E-79.3. Visitation rights of hospital patients.**

13 (a) Each minor who is admitted to a hospital licensed under this Article has the right to
14 designate a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis who shall have the unrestricted
15 privilege of being present while the minor patient is receiving hospital care.

16 (b) Each adult who is admitted to a hospital licensed under this Article has the right to
17 designate a spouse or health care agent who shall have the unrestricted privilege of being present
18 while the adult patient is receiving hospital care.

19 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 131E-112, Chapter 166A of the General
20 Statutes, or any other provision of law to the contrary, the rights specified in this section may not
21 be terminated, suspended, or waived by the hospital, the Department of Health and Human
22 Services, or the Governor upon the declaration of a disaster or emergency under Article 1A of
23 Chapter 166A of the General Statutes.

24 (d) No hospital licensed under this Article may require a patient to waive the rights
25 specified in this section.

26 (e) Each hospital licensed under this Article shall post in a conspicuous place on the
27 licensed premises informational materials developed by the Department of Health and Human
28 Services explaining the rights specified in this section."

29 SECTION 3. The Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health
30 Service Regulation, shall develop and disseminate to hospitals licensed under Article 5 of
31 Chapter 131E of the General Statutes free informational materials explaining the rights specified
32 in G.S. 131E-79.3, as enacted by Section 1 of this act.

33 SECTION 4. There is appropriated to the Department of Health and Human
34 Services, Division of Health Service Regulation, the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for
35 the 2019-2020 fiscal year, to develop and disseminate to hospitals licensed under Article 5 of



- 1 Chapter 131E of the General Statutes free informational materials about the patient rights
2 specified in G.S. 131E-79.3, as enacted by Section 1 of this act.
3 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.