

By Senator Bullard

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to patient lifting and handling
3 practices; creating s. 381.029, F.S.; defining the
4 term "hospital"; requiring hospitals to establish a
5 policy concerning the lifting and handling of patients
6 by hospital employees; requiring a committee to
7 develop the policy; providing for membership and
8 duties of the committee; requiring continuing
9 evaluation of the policy; providing an effective date.

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11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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13 Section 1. Section 381.029, Florida Statutes, is created to
14 read:

15 381.029 Patient lifting and handling practices.-

16 (1) As used in this section, the term "hospital" means a
17 health care facility licensed under chapter 395.

18 (2) A hospital shall establish an evidence-based policy
19 regarding the safe lifting and associated handling of patients
20 by hospital employees that minimizes the risk of injuries to
21 patients and employees. The policy shall be developed by a
22 committee composed of a representative mix of management and
23 nonmanagement employees, including registered nurses engaged in
24 direct patient care. The hospital may assign the task of
25 developing the policy to a newly created committee or to an
26 existing committee.

27 (3) The committee shall:

28 (a) Use relevant data to evaluate the risk of injury to
29 patients and employees resulting from the lifting and associated

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30 handling of patients.

31 (b) Determine the appropriateness of alternative strategies
32 for lifting and handling patients based on the population of
33 patients at the hospital and identified hospital-specific risk
34 factors. At a minimum, the committee shall consider:

35 1. Using mechanical lifting devices or other physical
36 changes to patient care areas of the hospital that minimize the
37 need to lift and handle the patient manually.

38 2. Using teams to lift and handle patients.

39 3. Providing training in safe lifting and handling
40 practices for employees engaged in caring for patients.

41 4. Incorporating physical space and construction design for
42 mechanical lifting devices in architectural plans for
43 construction or renovation of the hospital.

44 (c) Develop an ongoing evaluation process to determine the
45 effectiveness of the policy established under this section.

46 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.