

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2673
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Health & Human Services
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Engrossed

DIGEST

The medical committee privilege has existed in Texas since 1963 for the purpose of encouraging uninhibited discussion of events with the goal of improving the quality of care provided to patients. Medical committees are used for conducting quality assurance activities, medical staff credentialing, and the development of patient care protocols. The medical committee facilitates important hospital activities by encouraging open and honest discussion and disclosure among committee members and persons reporting to the committee. Ultimately, health care consumers benefit from the enhanced quality and efficiency of medical care made possible by the uninhibited medical committee deliberations. Since the creation of the privilege, the health care industry has evolved from a model in which health care was provided by individual hospitals operating alone, to the development of integrated systems, typically composed of several affiliated hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and long-term and skilled nursing facilities. However, current law speaks of committees of a "hospital" or "medical organization" only in singular terms. H.B. 2673 clarifies the statute to extend the medical committee privilege to a joint committee composed of representatives from various related entities within a health care system.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 2673 provides for the disclosure of health care information by certain health care providers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 161.031, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subsection (c), to provide that the term "medical committee" includes a committee, including a joint committee, of one or more health care systems if each health care system includes one or more of the entities listed in Subsection (a).

SECTION 2. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.