

MEMORANDUM

A.909 (Gray)/S.42 (Walczyk)

AN ACT to amend the education law and the public health law, in relation to authorizing certain nursing home medication aides to perform certain advanced tasks; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

This legislation would establish a demonstration program authorizing Certified Nursing Aides (CNAs) who receive advanced training to administer medications in nursing homes in St. Lawrence County under the supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN). LeadingAge New York supports this bill because it would improve the quality of care delivered in nursing homes while promoting professionalism in the workplace through educational and certification processes.

Currently, there are a number of states that utilize medication aides in nursing homes. In New York, the Department of Mental Hygiene (DMH) created a program by utilizing an exemption in the Nurse Practice Act that allows for direct care staff, such as CNAs, to administer medication under the supervision of an RN. Under the exemption, a direct care worker is trained by an RN to administer medication and then pass a final examination, as well as a clinical practicum, to become certified as a medication aide. Reports on the program have indicated a high level of success and a decrease in medication errors.

This legislation would ensure that individuals receiving services in St. Lawrence County would receive proper medication administration from certified aides, allowing more time for the RN to provide direct care at a more efficient rate and thus leading to a more productive use of licensed nursing skills. Quality of care for patients would increase, as would job satisfaction, wages, and staff retention.

For these reasons, LeadingAge New York strongly supports A.909 (Gray)/S.42 (Walczyk) and urges that it be adopted.

LeadingAge New York represents nearly 500 not-for-profit and public long-term care providers, including nursing homes, home care agencies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living, adult care facilities, adult day health care and managed long term care.