

Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Advisory Council

Response to Act 351 for the
2019 Regular Legislative Session

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Annual Report

Health Standards

Office of Aging and Adult Services

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Executive Summary

Act 351, enacted in the 2019 legislative session, creates the Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Advisory Council (hereafter referred to as the Council) within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). The legislation charges the Council with assessing the availability of patient-centered and family-focused palliative care in Louisiana and making recommendations to the LDH Secretary and to the legislature. Council members shall have at least two years of experience providing individual or interdisciplinary palliative care to pediatric, youth, or adult populations in inpatient, outpatient, or community settings.

The Council is charged with consulting with and advising the Secretary on matters related to the establishment, maintenance, operation, and outcomes of palliative care as well as on consumer and professional information and education.

The Council shall meet quarterly and provide an annual report to the House of Representatives and the Senate's Committees of Health and Welfare by February 1st 2020 through 2022.

The Council held its first meeting on January 23, 2020 at LDH. It was attended by all but one appointed member.

The council scheduled the next meeting for May 7, 2020 from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm at LDH. The meeting will focus on the current state of palliative care in Louisiana and necessary actions to advance access to and quality of palliative care services. Source materials were identified by the Council and will be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

A list of appointed members is included in this report.

Advisory Council Charge

The Act states that the Council shall perform the following tasks:

- (1) Conduct an analysis and submit a report of its findings to the senate and house committees on health and welfare on February 1st of each year, to include the following:
 - (a) Availability of palliative care, including palliative care for children in Louisiana for patients in the early stages of serious illness.
 - (b) Barriers to greater access to palliative care.
 - (c) Policies, practices, and protocols in this state concerning patient's rights related to palliative care, including the following:
 - (i) Whether a palliative care team member may introduce palliative care options to a patient without the consent of the patient's attending physician.
 - (ii) The practices and protocols for discussions between a palliative care team member and a patient on life-sustaining treatment or advance directives decisions.
 - (iii) The practices and protocols on informed consent and disclosure requirements for palliative care services.
- (2) Establish a statewide palliative care consumer and professional information and education program, in consultation with the department, to ensure that comprehensive and accurate information and education about palliative care are available to the public, healthcare providers, and healthcare facilities.

Additional Resources Available to Council

The Act provides that the Council may engage and solicit, as necessary, input, recommendations, and guidance pertaining to palliative care from interested parties and stakeholders including but not limited to the following:

- (a) The Louisiana-Mississippi Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- (b) The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- (c) The HomeCare Association of Louisiana
- (d) Hospice of Acadiana
- (e) Hospice of Baton Rouge.
- (f) The Louisiana Nursing Home Association.
- (g) The Louisiana Department of Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities.
- (h) The Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Behavioral Health.
- (i) AARP Louisiana
- (j) The Alzheimer's Association.
- (k) Louisiana State Medical Society.
- (l) ALS Association Louisiana-Mississippi Chapter.

The Council discussed adding the Louisiana Hospital Association.

LDH Responsibilities

The legislation states that LDH will provide staff support to the Council and create a Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Advisory Council web page on the LDH website. The website will include meeting dates and times, minutes from meetings, and any reports or data considered by the Council.

LDH must update its web page to include the following information and resources regarding palliative care:

- (1) Links to external resources regarding palliative care.
- (2) Continuing education opportunities on palliative care for healthcare providers.
- (3) Information about palliative care delivery in the home, primary, secondary, and tertiary environments.
- (4) Consumer educational materials regarding palliative care, including hospice care.

Council Members

Appointing Entities Specified in Act 351	Profession	Additional Credentials Required	Appointee
LA State Board of Medical Examiners	Physician	Board Certified in hospice and palliative medicine	Mary Raven, MD
LA State Board of Medical Examiners	Physician	Board Certified in hospice and palliative medicine	Sonia Malhotra, MD
LA State Board of Medical Examiners	Physician	Board Certified in pain management	Mordecai Potash, MD
LA State Board of Medical Examiners	Physician	Board Certified in pediatric palliative medicine	Cori Morrison, MD
LA State Board of Nursing	Advanced practice RN	Board Certified in hospice and palliative care	Christine Guidry, APRN
LA State Board of Nursing	Advanced practice RN	Board Certified in hospice and palliative care	Deborah Bourgeois, APRN
LA State Board of Nursing	Advanced practice RN	Board Certified in hospice and palliative care	Robin Rome, APRN
LA Board of Pharmacy	Pharmacist	Experience providing palliative care	Carl Aron
LA State Board of Social Work Examiners	Social Worker	Experience providing palliative care	Edgar Guedry, MSW
LDH (non-voting)			Helen Prett
LDH (non-voting)			Cecile Castello
Governor	Palliative Care Provider Administrator or Director	Current operational experience managing a palliative care program	Susan Nelson, MD
Governor	Spiritual care professional	Experience with providing palliative care	Fr. John "Car" Bani
Governor	Insurance plan administrator	Experience in reimbursement coverage and claims processing for palliative care	
Governor	Patient/family advocate	Must be independent of a hospital or other healthcare facility	Janet Pugh Foret
Governor	Patient/family advocate	Must be independent of a hospital or other healthcare facility	Trey Gibson
Governor	Patient/family advocate	Must be independent of a hospital or other healthcare facility	Pati Capdevielle

Council Business

At its first meeting on January 23, 2020, the Council elected Susan Nelson, MD as Chair. Cori Morrison, MD was elected Vice-Chair.

The Council discussed a variety of issues that affect access to and quality of palliative care, including:

- Palliative care as distinct from end of life care
- Addressing diverse cultural and religious backgrounds
- Pediatric palliative care
- Workforce development
- Practice patterns
- Palliative care for individuals who are homeless or in non-traditional living environments
- Consumer education
- Payment structures

. The discussion generated a list of potential committees:

- Education
- Pediatric
- Policy and Practice Patterns
- Nursing and Allied Health
- Non-Traditional and Extended Care
- Patient Advocacy
- Diversity and Equity
- Availability and Barriers

Dr. Sonia Malhotra volunteered to chair the education committee.

Department staff prepared a list of resources for the Council to consider as the web page is built. Council members will provide input on provided resources and suggest additional sites at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2020 from 1:00 pm– 2:30 pm at LDH. The agenda will focus on the state's palliative care report card and the past, present and future of palliative care in Louisiana.

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