

No. 1996-142

AN ACT

SB 1165

Amending the act of July 20, 1974 (P.L.564, No.193), entitled "An act providing for the increased use of peer review groups by giving protection to individuals and data who report to any review group," extending the protection given by the act to review committees of associations of veterinarians; and redefining "professional health care providers" to include veterinarians.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Section 2 of the act of July 20, 1974 (P.L.564, No.193), known as the Peer Review Protection Act, amended October 5, 1978 (P.L.1121, No.262), is amended to read:

Section 2. Definitions.—As used in this act:

"Peer review" means the procedure for evaluation by professional health care providers of the quality and efficiency of services ordered or performed by other professional health care providers, including practice analysis, inpatient hospital and extended care facility utilization review, medical audit, ambulatory care review, claims review, and the compliance of a hospital, nursing home or convalescent home or other health care facility operated by a professional health care provider with the standards set by an association of health care providers and with applicable laws, rules and regulations. *Peer review, as it applies to veterinarians, shall mean the procedure for evaluation by licensed doctors of veterinary medicine of the quality and efficiency of veterinary medicine ordered or performed by other doctors of veterinary medicine with the standards set by an association of doctors of veterinary medicine and with applicable laws, rules and regulations.*

"Professional health care provider" means:

(1) individuals or organizations who are approved, licensed or otherwise regulated to practice or operate in the health care field under the laws of the Commonwealth, including, but not limited to, the following individuals or organizations:

- (1) A physician.
- (2) A dentist.
- (3) A podiatrist.
- (4) A chiropractor.
- (5) An optometrist.
- (6) A psychologist.
- (7) A pharmacist.
- (8) A registered or practical nurse.
- (9) A physical therapist.

(10) An administrator of a hospital, a nursing or convalescent home, or other health care facility.

(11) A corporation or other organization operating a hospital, a nursing or convalescent home or other health care facility.]

(i) a physician;

(ii) a dentist;

(iii) a podiatrist;

(iv) a chiropractor;

(v) an optometrist;

(vi) a psychologist;

(vii) a pharmacist;

(viii) a registered or practical nurse;

(ix) a physical therapist;

(x) an administrator of a hospital, nursing or convalescent home or other health care facility; or

(xi) a corporation or other organization operating a hospital, nursing or convalescent home or other health care facility; or

(2) individuals licensed to practice veterinary medicine under the laws of this Commonwealth.

“Professional society” includes medical, *veterinary*, psychological, nursing, dental, optometric, pharmaceutical, chiropractic and podiatric organizations having as members at least a majority of the eligible licentiates in the area or health care facility or agency served by the particular society.

“Review organization” means any committee engaging in peer review, including a hospital utilization review committee, a hospital tissue committee, a health insurance review committee, a hospital plan corporation review committee, a professional health service plan review committee, a dental review committee, a physicians’ advisory committee, *a veterinary review committee*, a nursing advisory committee, any committee established pursuant to the medical assistance program, and any committee established by one or more State or local professional societies, to gather and review information relating to the care and treatment of patients for the purposes of (i) evaluating and improving the quality of health care rendered; (ii) reducing morbidity or mortality; or (iii) establishing and enforcing guidelines designed to keep within reasonable bounds the cost of health care. It shall also mean any hospital board, committee or individual reviewing the professional qualifications or activities of its medical staff or applicants for admission thereto. It shall also mean a committee of an association of professional health care providers reviewing the operation of hospitals, nursing homes, convalescent homes or other health care facilities.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 4th day of December, A.D. 1996.

THOMAS J. RIDGE