

Joseph

From: Jane Davis [jdavis@ramdocs.org]
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To: joseph@priorityhealtheducation.com
Subject: News from Virginia Academy of Sleep Medicine



*Virginia Academy of Sleep Medicine Member Alert
February 2, 2010*

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HB 725 Update!

Dear VASM Members:

I wanted to share the good news that HB 725 has now passed the relevant House of Delegates subcommittee and House committee and will now go to full House of Delegates vote. Once it passes this hurdle, our next step will be to pass this legislation in the Senate. Thus, although we have a ways to go, we are making progress. Our appreciation should extend to the Advocacy Committee and in particular to Anna Rodriguez, RPSGT and Richard Parisi, MD who represented the VASM yesterday and today respectively. We will continue to keep you abreast of developments in our efforts to pass a law on PSGT licensure.

Now is the time for VASM members to contact their Delegate to ask for their support of HP 725!

HWI Contact Information for HB 725

Robert Orrock (Chair) - County of Fairfax; City of Falls Church

delBORrock@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1054

John O'Bannon - County of Henrico

DelJOBannon@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1073

Samuel Nixon - County of Rockingham; City of Harrisonburg

DelSNixon@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1027

Robert Bell - County of Albemarle; City of Charlottesville

DelRBell@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1058

Clifford Athey - Counties of Montgomery and Pulaski; City of Radford

DelCAthey@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1018

David Nutter - Counties of Montgomery and Pulaski; City of Radford

DelDNuter@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1003

Chris Peace - Counties of James City and York; City of Newport News

DelCPeace@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1097

Anne Crockett-Stark - Counties of Bland, Giles, Pulaski, Tazewell, and Wythe

delACrockett-Stark@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1006

Brenda Pogge - Cities of Hampton and Newport News

DelBPogge@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1096

James Massie - County of Henrico; City of Richmond

DelJMassie@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1072

Donald Merricks - Counties of Page, Rappahannock & Shenandoah

DelDMerricks@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1016

Richard Bell - Counties of Bedford and Botetourt; City of Bedford

DelDBell@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1020

Scott Garrett - Counties of Bedford and Campbell

DelSGarrett@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1023

Chris Stolle - City of Virginia Beach

DelCStolle@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1083

Lionell Spruill - Cities of Chesapeake and Suffolk

DelLSpruill@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1077

Mark Sickles - County of Fairfax

DelMSickles@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1043

Adam Ebbin - County of Arlington

DelAEbbin@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1049

Algie Howell - City of Norfolk

DelAHowell@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1090

Mamye BaCote - City of Newport News

DelMBaCote@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1095

David Englin - County of Fairfax

DelDEnglin@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1045

Joseph Morrissey - County of Henrico; City of Richmond

DelJMorrissey@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1074

Patrick Hope - County of Fairfax; City of Alexandria

DelPHope@house.virginia.gov

804/698-1047

[Please Support HB 725 \(Peace\) to License Polysomnographic Technologists](#)

Polysomnographic Technologists (also known as Sleep Techs) are health-care professionals who work as part of a team under the supervision of a licensed physician to assist in the education, evaluation, treatment and follow up of patients with sleep disorders.

Polysomnographic Technologists monitor and record data produced during sleep studies as well as daytime tests. Sleep studies are ordered by a physician when a patient suffers from disorders such as insomnia, sleep apnea, narcolepsy, restless leg syndrome, sleep walking and night terrors.

A sleep study (or polysomnogram) is a safe, painless test, which can help determine the diagnosis of a sleep problem. During the test patients are monitored by Polysomnographic Technologists while they sleep in comfortable, private bedrooms. In order to do this, electrodes are placed on the patient's head, face and body. These leads simply record the electrical activity of their brain and muscles. Other sensors attached to the patient record breathing, and oxygen levels. During the study the information about their sleep is

recorded on a computer while the patient is observed remotely with a camera.

The sleep technologist is directly involved in providing complex health care services. He or she must be able to identify significant sleep apnea and oxygen loss when it occurs and to then start positive airway pressure therapy on an expeditious basis. The technologist recognizes serious heart rhythm abnormalities and seizures as they occur and is able initiate emergency protocols. An ideal sleep technologist must exhibit attention to detail, good troubleshooting abilities and excellent patient interactions capabilities to put the patient at ease.

HB 725 will require licensure for those individuals performing polysomnography, creates an independent Advisory Board to properly regulate and discipline the profession as well as describes the activities performed by Polysomnographic Technologists.

The Advisory Board on Polysomnographic Technology is *self-funded* by licensing fees. The Department of Health Professions (DHP) estimates that 64 licensees are needed to fund an independent Advisory Board on Polysomnographic Technology. The DHP also reports that an estimated

293 persons are nationally registered as polysomnographic technologists in Virginia.

HB 725 WILL NOT prevent any currently licensed health care professional from practicing within their full scope of practice.

HB 725 WILL

protect the health and safety of patients undergoing sleep studies in Virginia. Public protection requires that sleep technologists undergo background screening, complete nationally standard education, and demonstrate clinical competence by appropriate national standards. The growth in the field of sleep technology has been exponential. In light of this growth, creating a pathway for licensure of Polysomnographic Technicians is necessary.

Virginia Academy of Sleep Medicine

Jane Davis

2201 West Broad Street, Suite 205

Richmond, Virginia 23220

804/622-8135

804/788-9987 fax

jdavis@ramdocs.org

www.vasleepmedicine.org

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