

Support SB146

Dear Honorable Legislator:

We are seeking your support of SB 146 sponsored by Senator Julie Raque Adams.
This bill would establish the licensure of genetic counselors in Kentucky.

Genetic counselors are specialized health care providers who are specifically trained to help families affected by genetic conditions or inherited risk factors by explaining inheritance, testing options, and associated risks. As an example, a genetic counselor would provide information to individuals with a family history of cancer, cardiovascular disease, Huntington disease, or Alzheimer disease. Genetic counselors are integral members of multidisciplinary care and are often working with physicians and other health care professionals (including other licensed professionals) to provide specialized expertise and insights to help optimize patient care. Genetic counselors are certified on a national level through the American Board of Genetic Counseling.

Currently, Kentucky does not have a law for the licensure of genetic counselors. At this point in time, anyone could present themselves as a genetic counselor to the public, regardless of training or credentials. Twenty one (21) states (including Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee and Virginia) have licensure in place and 20 additional states have bills introduced or are getting bills drafted. The growth and availability of genetic counseling services are limited by the inability of genetic counselors to bill independently.

SB 146 would do the following:

- **PROTECT** the public by ensuring that those presenting themselves as a “genetic counselor” have the training and certification to do so.
- **ALLOW** for genetic counselors in Kentucky to become credentialed independently with insurance companies and to bill for services using the existing genetic counseling CPT code (96040).
- **EXPAND** access to genetic counseling services and increase the number of genetic counselors in Kentucky.

We ask that you please consider supporting SB 146 AN ACT relating to the licensure of genetic counselors.

Sincerely,

Baptist Health
Colon Cancer Prevention Project
Kentucky Cancer Consortium
KentuckyOne Health
Norton Healthcare
Owensboro Health
St. Elizabeth Healthcare
UK HealthCare
University of Louisville



Colon Cancer
Prevention Project



KentuckyOne Health®



UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE

GENETIC COUNSELOR Licensure SB146

BACKGROUND

- Genetic counselors are specialized health care providers who are specifically trained to help families affected by genetic conditions or inherited risk factors by explaining inheritance, testing options, and associated risks.
- As an example, a genetic counselor would provide information to individuals with a family history of cancer, cardiovascular disease, Huntington disease, or Alzheimer disease.
- Genetic counselors are integral members of multidisciplinary care and are often working with physicians and other health care professionals (including other licensed professionals) to provide specialized expertise and insights to help optimize patient care.
- Genetic counselors in Kentucky practice at Baptist Health, KentuckyOne Health, Norton Healthcare, Owensboro Health, St. Elizabeth Hospital, University of Kentucky and University of Louisville.
- Genetic counselors are certified on a national level through the American Board of Genetic Counseling.
- At this point in time, anyone could present themselves as a genetic counselor to the public, regardless of training or credentials.
- Kentucky is an underserved area of the country with respect to genetic counseling services. Currently, there are approximately 20 genetic counselors in Kentucky.

ISSUE

- Kentucky currently does not have a law for the licensure of genetic counselors.
- 21 states (including Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee and Virginia) have licensure in place and 20 additional states have bills introduced or are getting bills drafted.
- The growth and availability of genetic counseling services is limited by the inability of genetic counselors to bill independently.

SOLUTION

- Create licensure for genetic counselors in Kentucky to provide greater access.
- The cost of the licensure process is expected to be covered by licensure fees.
- Licensure is expected to lessen the financial burden on the Medicaid system because the genetic counselor charges are likely to be less than the physician charges currently being utilized. In addition, genetic counselor involvement in patient care has been shown to reduce the number of inappropriately ordered genetic tests, further reducing costs to Medicaid.

ACTION

- **PROTECT** the public by ensuring that those presenting themselves as a “genetic counselor” have the training and certification to do so.
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- **EXPAND** access to genetic counseling services and increase the number of genetic counselors in Kentucky.



Colon Cancer
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