

SUBJECT: Reporting mandates for post-secondary epinephrine auto-injector policies

COMMITTEE: Higher Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — C. Turner, Button, Frullo, Howard, Pacheco, Schaefer, Smithee, Walle, Wilson

0 nays

2 absent — Stucky, E. Johnson

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Christina Hoppe, Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT); Dustin Meador, Texas Association of Community Colleges; Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association; Andrew Cates, Texas Nurses Association; Clayton Travis, Texas Pediatric Society; Ryan Lowery; Maria Person)

Against — None

On — Kathy Mosteller, University of Texas at Austin; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Rex Peebles, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 51.882 authorizes institutions of higher education to adopt and implement a policy on the maintenance, storage, administration, and disposal of epinephrine auto-injectors on the institution's campus.

DIGEST: HB 476 would require institutions of higher education that have policies on epinephrine auto-injectors to include the policy in the institution's student handbook or a similar publication and to publish the policy on the institution's website.

Institutions that adopted such policies would have to submit to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) a copy of their policies and any amendments the institution adopted. DSHS would be required to maintain a record, available to the public on request, of the most recent policies each institution has submitted.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 476 would help institutions of higher education and the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) identify barriers that prevent the successful adoption and implementation of epinephrine auto-injector policies. Establishing robust, easily accessible policies on the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors would help students and staff know where to go and what to do in the event of a severe allergic reaction.

During the 85th regular legislative session, higher education institutions were given the authority to create epinephrine auto-injector policies. HB 476 would make the implementation process easier by requiring schools with existing policies to provide information detailing their policies to DSHS. This would enable institutions seeking to establish an auto-injector policy to use the information stored at DSHS to see what policies similar institutions had already successfully implemented.

This bill would not require institutions of higher education to adopt new policies. Instead, it would encourage post-secondary institutions to adopt proactive solutions to help save the lives of students, staff, and faculty that experience severe allergic reactions.

OPPONENTS SAY: No concerns identified.