

## 2020 Kansas Statutes

**65-468. Rural health networks; definitions; temporary suspension of limitations related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.** As used in K.S.A. 65-468 through 65-474, and amendments thereto:

(a) "Healthcare provider" means any person licensed or otherwise authorized by law to provide health care services in this state or a professional corporation organized pursuant to the professional corporation law of Kansas by persons who are authorized by law to form such corporation and who are health care providers as defined by this subsection, or an officer, employee or agent thereof, acting in the course and scope of employment or agency.

(b) "Member" means any hospital, emergency medical service, local health department, home health agency, adult care home, medical clinic, mental health center or clinic or nonemergency transportation system.

(c) "Mid-level practitioner" means a physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse who has entered into a written protocol with a rural health network physician.

(d) "Physician" means a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery.

(e) "Rural health network" means an alliance of members, including at least one critical access hospital and at least one other hospital, that has developed a comprehensive plan submitted to and approved by the secretary of health and environment regarding: Patient referral and transfer; the provision of emergency and nonemergency transportation among members; the development of a network-wide emergency services plan; and the development of a plan for sharing patient information and services between hospital members concerning medical staff credentialing, risk management, quality assurance and peer review.

(f) (1) "Critical access hospital" means a member of a rural health network that: Makes available 24-hour emergency care services; provides not more than 25 acute care inpatient beds or in the case of a facility with an approved swing-bed agreement a combined total of extended care and acute care beds that does not exceed 25 beds; provides acute inpatient care for a period that does not exceed, on an annual average basis, 96 hours per patient; and provides nursing services under the direction of a licensed professional nurse and continuous licensed professional nursing services for not less than 24 hours of every day when any bed is occupied or the facility is open to provide services for patients unless an exemption is granted by the licensing agency pursuant to rules and regulations. The critical access hospital may provide any services otherwise required to be provided by a full-time, on-site dietician, pharmacist, laboratory technician, medical technologist and radiological technologist on a part-time, off-site basis under written agreements or arrangements with one or more providers or suppliers recognized under medicare. The critical access hospital may provide inpatient services by a physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse or a clinical nurse specialist subject to the oversight of a physician who need not be present in the facility. In addition to the facility's 25 acute beds or swing beds, or both, the critical access hospital may have a psychiatric unit or a rehabilitation unit, or both. Each unit shall not exceed 10 beds and neither unit shall count toward the 25-bed limit or be subject to the average 96-hour length of stay restriction.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1), prior to June 30, 2021, to the extent that a critical access hospital determines it is necessary to treat COVID-19 patients or to separate COVID-19 patients and non-COVID-19 patients, such critical access hospital shall not be limited to 25 beds or, in the case of a facility with an approved swing bed agreement, to a combined total of 25 extended care and acute care beds, and shall not be limited to providing acute inpatient care for a period of time that does not exceed, on an annual average basis, 96 hours per patient.

(g) "Hospital" means a hospital other than a critical access hospital that has entered into a written agreement with at least one critical access hospital to form a rural health network and to provide medical or administrative supporting services within the limit of the hospital's capabilities.

**History:** L. 1992, ch. 158, § 1; L. 1998, ch. 53, § 2; L. 2002, ch. 203, § 3; L. 2004, ch. 87, § 1; L. 2004, ch. 180, § 8; L. 2011, ch. 114, § 54; L. 2020, ch. 1, § 39 (Special

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