

2023 Kansas Statutes

60-427. Physician-patient privilege. (a) As used in this section:

(1) "Patient" means a person who, for the sole purpose of securing preventive, palliative, or curative treatment, or a diagnosis preliminary to such treatment, of such person's physical or mental condition, consults a physician, or submits to an examination by a physician.

(2) "Physician" means a person licensed or reasonably believed by the patient to be licensed to practice medicine or one of the healing arts as defined in K.S.A. 65-2802, and amendments thereto, in the state or jurisdiction in which the consultation or examination takes place.

(3) "Holder of the privilege" means the patient while alive and not under guardianship or conservatorship or the guardian or conservator of the patient, or the personal representative of a deceased patient.

(4) "Confidential communication between physician and patient" means such information transmitted between physician and patient, including information obtained by an examination of the patient, as is transmitted in confidence and by a means which, so far as the patient is aware, discloses the information to no third persons other than those reasonably necessary for the transmission of the information or the accomplishment of the purpose for which it is transmitted.

(b) Except as provided by subsections (c), (d), (e) and (f), a person, whether or not a party, has a privilege in a civil action or in a prosecution for a misdemeanor, other than a prosecution for a violation of K.S.A. 8-2,144 or 8-1567, and amendments thereto, or a city ordinance or county resolution which prohibits the acts prohibited by those statutes, to refuse to disclose, and to prevent a witness from disclosing, a communication, if the person claims the privilege and the judge finds that: (1) The communication was a confidential communication between patient and physician; (2) the patient or the physician reasonably believed the communication necessary or helpful to enable the physician to make a diagnosis of the condition of the patient or to prescribe or render treatment therefor; (3) the witness (i) is the holder of the privilege, (ii) at the time of the communication was the physician or a person to whom disclosure was made because reasonably necessary for the transmission of the communication or for the accomplishment of the purpose for which it was transmitted or (iii) is any other person who obtained knowledge or possession of the communication as the result of an intentional breach of the physician's duty of nondisclosure by the physician or the physician's agent or servant; and (4) the claimant is the holder of the privilege or a person authorized to claim the privilege for the holder of the privilege.

(c) There is no privilege under this section as to any relevant communication between the patient and the patient's physician: (1) Upon an issue of the patient's condition in an action to commit the patient or otherwise place the patient under the control of another or others because of alleged incapacity or mental illness, in an action in which the patient seeks to establish the patient's competence or in an action to recover damages on account of conduct of the patient which constitutes a criminal offense other than a misdemeanor; (2) upon an issue as to the validity of a document as a will of the patient; or (3) upon an issue between parties claiming by testate or intestate succession from a deceased patient.

(d) There is no privilege under this section in an action in which the condition of the patient is an element or factor of the claim or defense of the patient or of any party claiming through or under the patient or claiming as a beneficiary of the patient through a contract to which the patient is or was a party.

(e) There is no privilege under this section: (1) As to blood drawn at the request of a law enforcement officer pursuant to K.S.A. 8-1001, and amendments thereto, or K.S.A. 3-1007, and amendments thereto; and (2) as to information which the physician or the patient is required to report to a public official or as to information required to be recorded in a public office, unless the statute requiring the report or record specifically provides that the information shall not be disclosed.

(f) No person has a privilege under this section if the judge finds that sufficient evidence, aside from the communication has been introduced to warrant a finding

that the services of the physician were sought or obtained to enable or aid anyone to commit or to plan to commit a crime or a tort, or to escape detection or apprehension after the commission of a crime or a tort.

(g) A privilege under this section as to a communication is terminated if the judge finds that any person while a holder of the privilege has caused the physician or any agent or servant of the physician to testify in any action to any matter of which the physician or the physician's agent or servant gained knowledge through the communication.

(h) Providing false information to a physician for the purpose of obtaining a prescription-only drug shall not be a confidential communication between physician and patient and no person shall have a privilege in any prosecution for unlawfully obtaining or distributing a prescription-only drug under K.S.A. 21-5708, and amendments thereto.

History: L. 1963, ch. 303, 60-427; L. 1965, ch. 354, § 8; L. 1988, ch. 210, § 1; L. 1992, ch. 99, § 2; L. 2009, ch. 32, § 52; L. 2011, ch. 105, § 30; L. 2012, ch. 172, § 36; L. 2018, ch. 106, § 33; L. 2022, ch. 80, § 21; July 1.