

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1708

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long Term Care, February 18, 2022

Title: An act relating to facility fees for audio-only telemedicine.

Brief Description: Concerning facility fees for audio-only telemedicine.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Riccelli, Bateman, Macri, Tharinger and Pollet).

Brief History: Passed House: 1/26/22, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 2/16/22, 2/18/22 [DP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits a hospital that is an originating site or a distant site for audio-only telemedicine from charging a facility fee.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Frockt, Vice Chair; Muzzall, Ranking Member; Conway, Keiser, Padden, Randall, Robinson, Sefzik and Van De Wege.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Rivers.

Staff: Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

Background: Audio-only telemedicine is the delivery of health care services through the use of audio-only technology, permitting real-time communication between a patient at their physical location, the "originating site", and a health care provider at a different physical location, the "distant site", for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Audio-only telemedicine does not include the use of facsimile or electronic mail, or the delivery of health care services that are customarily delivered by audio-only technology and customarily not billed as separate services by the provider, such as sharing laboratory results.

In addition to professional fees for provider services, certain originating sites for audio-only telemedicine may charge a separate facility fee for infrastructure costs and preparation of the patient, subject to certain conditions. Distant sites and hospitals acting as originating sites may not charge the following payors a facility fee for the use of audio-only telemedicine:

- a health plan offered by a health carrier;
- a health plan offered to school or state employees;
- a Medicaid managed care plan; or
- a behavioral health administrative services organization.

Summary of Bill: A hospital that is an originating site or a distant site for audio-only telemedicine may not charge a facility fee, regardless of payor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: None.

Persons Testifying: No one.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.