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SENATE BILL 5144

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State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senator McCaslin

Read first time 01/12/95. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the uniform benefits package schedule of covered  
2 health services; and amending RCW 43.72.130.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.72.130 and 1993 c 492 s 449 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The commission shall define the uniform benefits package, which  
7 shall include those health services that, consistent with the goals and  
8 intent of chapter 492, Laws of 1993, are effective and necessary on a  
9 societal basis for the maintenance of the health of citizens of the  
10 state, weighed against the need to control state health services  
11 expenditures.

12 (2) The schedule of covered health services shall emphasize proven  
13 preventive and primary health care and shall be composed of the  
14 following essential health services: (a) Primary and specialty health  
15 services; (b) inpatient and outpatient hospital services; (c)  
16 prescription drugs and medications; (d) reproductive services; (e)  
17 services necessary for maternity and well-child care, including  
18 preventive dental services for children; ~~((and))~~ (f) physical therapy,  
19 rehabilitative, and physical medicine; and (g) case-managed chemical

1 dependency, mental health, short-term skilled nursing facility, home  
2 health, and hospice services, to the extent that such services reduce  
3 inappropriate utilization of more intensive or less efficacious medical  
4 services. The commission shall determine the specific schedule of  
5 health services within the uniform benefits package, including  
6 limitations on scope and duration of services. The schedule shall be  
7 the benefit and actuarial equivalent of the schedule of benefits  
8 offered by the basic health plan on January 1, 1993, including any  
9 additions that may result from the inclusion of the services listed in  
10 (c) through (f) of this subsection. The commission shall consider the  
11 recommendations of health services effectiveness (~~panels~~ ~~[committee]~~)  
12 committee established pursuant to RCW 43.72.060 in defining the uniform  
13 benefits package.

14 (3) The uniform benefits package shall not limit coverage for  
15 preexisting or prior conditions, except that the commission shall  
16 establish exclusions for preexisting or prior conditions to the extent  
17 necessary to prevent residents from waiting until health services are  
18 needed before enrolling in a certified health plan.

19 (4) The commission shall establish enrollee point of service cost-  
20 sharing for nonpreventive health services, related to enrollee  
21 household income, such that financial considerations are not a barrier  
22 to access for low-income persons, but that, for those of means, the  
23 uniform benefits package provides for moderate point of service cost-  
24 sharing. All point of service cost-sharing and cost control  
25 requirements shall apply uniformly to all health care providers  
26 providing substantially similar uniform benefits package services. The  
27 schedule shall provide for an alternate and lower schedule of cost-  
28 sharing applicable to enrollees with household income below the federal  
29 poverty level.

30 (5) The commission shall adopt rules related to coordination of  
31 benefits and premium payments. The rules shall not have the effect of  
32 eliminating enrollee financial participation. The commission shall  
33 endeavor to assure an equitable distribution, among both employers and  
34 employees, of the costs of coverage for those households composed of  
35 more than one member in the work force.

36 (6) In determining the uniform benefits package, the commission  
37 shall endeavor to seek the opinions of and information from the public.  
38 The commission shall consider the results of official public health  
39 assessment and policy development activities including recommendations

1 of the department of health in discharging its responsibilities under  
2 this section.

3 (7) The commission shall submit the following to the legislature by  
4 December 1, 1994, and by December 1 of the year preceding any year in  
5 which the commission proposes to significantly modify the uniform  
6 benefits package: (a) The uniform benefits package; and (b) an  
7 independent actuarial analysis of the cost of the proposed package,  
8 giving consideration to the factors considered under RCW 43.72.040(6).  
9 The commission shall not modify the services included in the uniform  
10 benefits package before January 1, 1999.

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