
SENATE BILL 5459

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senators Quigley, Winsley, Wojahn and Franklin; by request of Health Services Commission

Read first time 01/24/95. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to changing the reporting dates on the
2 consolidation of workers' compensation medical benefits and the health
3 care system; and amending RCW 43.72.850.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.72.850 and 1993 c 492 s 485 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 On or before January 1, 1995, and January 1, 1996, the health
8 services commission, in coordination with the department of labor and
9 industries and the workers' compensation advisory committee, shall
10 study and make an interim report, and on or before January 1, (~~1996~~)
11 1997, a final report, to the governor and appropriate committees of the
12 legislature on the provision of medical benefits for injured workers
13 under a consolidated health care system. The study shall include a
14 review of options and recommendations for modifying the industrial
15 insurance system to provide medical services for injured workers in a
16 more cost-effective manner under a consolidated system, and may include
17 consideration of the purchase of industrial insurance medical benefits
18 through the health care authority or the inclusion of industrial
19 insurance medical benefits in the services offered by certified health

1 plans or other appropriate options. The commission should also give
2 consideration to at least the following issues: The use of managed
3 care and the effect of managed care options on the injured workers'
4 choice of health services provider; the potential cost savings or other
5 impacts of various consolidation options; the benefit structure
6 required under industrial insurance; the potential for consolidation to
7 meet or exceed existing medical cost management of the medical aid
8 fund; the impact of separating the medical management of claims from
9 the disability management of claims; the relationship between return-
10 to-work efforts, medical services, and disability prevention; the
11 relationship between medical services and rehabilitation services; and
12 the effects of the quasi-judicial system that determines industrial
13 insurance rights and obligations. In addition, the final report shall
14 include a proposed plan and timeline for including the medical benefits
15 of the industrial insurance system in the services offered by certified
16 health plans. The proposed plan shall assure that:

17 (1) The plan shall not take effect until at least ninety-seven
18 percent of state residents have access to the uniform benefits package
19 as required in chapter 492, Laws of 1993;

20 (2) The uniform benefits package of the certified health plan will
21 provide benefits for injured workers that are at least equivalent to
22 the medical benefits provided to injured workers under Title 51 RCW as
23 determined by the department of labor and industries as of the
24 effective date of the plan, including payments for services that are
25 ancillary to industrial insurance medical benefits, such as but not
26 limited to medical examinations for permanent disabilities;

27 (3) Other nonmedical benefits required to be provided under Title
28 51 RCW, such as but not limited to total or partial disability benefits
29 or vocational rehabilitation benefits, are not affected;

30 (4) Employers who do not choose to become certified health plans
31 under chapter 492, Laws of 1993, will continue to be required to
32 provide industrial insurance medical benefits under Title 51 RCW;

33 (5) Employees participating in the plan shall not be required to
34 pay deductibles, copayments, or other point of service charges for
35 services related to industrial insurance injuries or diseases, such
36 costs to be paid by the department of labor and industries or self-
37 insured employer, as applicable;

38 (6) The plan includes a mechanism to return to workers and
39 employers, in equal shares, any savings that are realized in the costs

1 of medical services for injured workers, as identified by the
2 department of labor and industries;

3 (7) The majority of the employer's employees or, if the employees
4 are represented for collective bargaining purposes, the exclusive
5 bargaining representative voluntarily agree to the employer's
6 participation in the plan.

--- END ---