
Health Care Committee

SSB 5838

Brief Description: Limiting the substitution of preferred drugs in hepatitis C treatment.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Kastama, Benson, Poulsen, Brandland, Deccio, Keiser, Thibaudeau, Franklin and Rasmussen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Exempts refills of certain drugs for the treatment of hepatitis C from the requirement that a pharmacist exchange a preferred drug for any nonpreferred drug.

Hearing Date: 3/31/05

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

In 2003, the Legislature passed SB 6088 establishing an evidence-based prescription drug program for state agencies. The program includes a preferred drug list (PDL), which is a list of prescription drug classes that have gone through an evidence-based review process to determine the best choice of drugs within the class; and a therapeutic interchange program, through which a provider may endorse the PDL, thus requiring a pharmacist to exchange the preferred drug for any nonpreferred drug that the provider prescribes. The requirement to exchange the preferred for nonpreferred drug, however, does not apply to prescriptions for a refill of an antipsychotic, antidepressant, chemotherapy, antiretroviral, or immunosuppressive drug.

Summary of Bill:

Under the state's prescription drug program, the requirement that a pharmacist exchange a preferred drug for any nonpreferred drug does not apply to a refill of an immunomodulator/antiviral treatment for hepatitis C for which an established, fixed duration of therapy is prescribed for at least twenty-four weeks but no more than forty-eight weeks.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.