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**Health Care & Wellness Committee**

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**HB 2159**

**Brief Description:** Concerning restoration of funding to in-home care services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Jenkins, Appleton, Morrell, Reykdal, Stanford, Pollet, Liias, Ryu, Ormsby, Bergquist, Moeller, Stonier and Freeman.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the number of in-home care hours that a client may receive to be based solely upon an objective assessment of the medical need of the client according to the Washington Administrative Code as it existed on December 1, 2012.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/14

**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) performs assessments on new clients to determine each client's ability to care for himself or herself. Assessments occur at least annually or more frequently if there is a significant change in the client's ability to care for himself or herself. The Department uses the Comprehensive Assessment Reporting Evaluation (CARE) tool to conduct client assessments. The CARE tool assesses a person's ability to perform various tasks such as toileting, bathing, dressing, ambulating, meal preparation, and household chores. The CARE tool determines the client's classification group for the purpose of establishing the number of hours of in-home care services by measuring cognitive performance, clinical complexity, mood and behavior, activities of daily living, and exceptional care criteria.

In the 2011-13 biennial operating budget, the Department was directed to reduce personal care service hours for adult clients receiving in-home personal care through Medicaid. The reduction represented a 10 percent acuity-based reduction with the most acute clients receiving a lesser percentage of the reduction and the least acute clients receiving a higher percentage reduction.

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

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Social and Health Services' (Department) determination of the number of in-home care hours that a client may receive must be based solely upon an objective assessment of the medical need of the client. Eligible individuals must receive the hours of in-home care designated as "base hours" as they existed in the Washington Administrative Code on December 1, 2012, unless the individual is eligible for a modification in hours under the Washington Administrative Code as it existed on December 1, 2012. The Department may not consider any other factors in making its determination.

Legislative findings are made regarding reductions to home care hours and the hardship resulting from these reductions for vulnerable seniors and people with disabilities.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect July 1, 2014.