
SENATE BILL 5353

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Cleveland, Muzzall, Riccelli, Bateman, Frame, Hasegawa, Krishnadasan, Nobles, Valdez, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/17/25. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the diabetes prevention and obesity treatment
2 act; reenacting and amending RCW 41.05.017; adding a new section to
3 chapter 48.43 RCW; and adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 48.43
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) For health plans issued or renewed on or after January 1,
8 2026, a health carrier shall include coverage for the diagnosis and
9 treatment of the chronic disease of obesity including, but not
10 limited to:

11 (a) Intensive health behavioral and lifestyle treatment;

12 (b) Metabolic and bariatric surgery; and

13 (c) Food and drug administration-approved obesity medication.

14 (2) Coverage criteria for food and drug administration-approved
15 obesity medications may not be more restrictive than the food and
16 drug administration-approved indications for those treatments.

17 (3) Coverage under this section may not be different or separate
18 from coverage for any other illness, condition, or disorder for
19 purposes of determining deductibles, copayment, and coinsurance
20 factors, and benefit year maximums for deductibles, copayment, and
21 coinsurance factors.

1 (4) This section does not prohibit a health carrier from applying
2 utilization management to determine the medical necessity for
3 treatment of the chronic disease of obesity under this section if
4 appropriateness and medical necessity determinations are made in the
5 same manner as those determinations are made for the treatment of any
6 other illness, condition, or disorder covered by a contract.

7 (5) Intensive health behavior and lifestyle treatment may include
8 interventions certified by or recognized by the centers for disease
9 control and prevention or recommended by current clinical standards
10 of care.

11 (6) For purposes of this section:

12 (a) "Intensive health behavior and lifestyle treatment" means an
13 evidence-based, intensive, multicomponent behavioral or lifestyle
14 modification intervention that supports healthy weight management and
15 is delivered in-person or through telemedicine as defined in RCW
16 48.43.735.

17 (b) "Food and drug administration-approved obesity medication"
18 means any medication approved by the United States food and drug
19 administration with an indication for chronic weight management in
20 patients with an obesity diagnosis.

21 (c) "Metabolic and bariatric surgery" means any surgical
22 intervention included in the most current American society for
23 metabolic and bariatric surgery and international federation for the
24 surgery of obesity and metabolic disorders guidelines on indications
25 for metabolic and bariatric surgery.

26 **Sec. 2.** RCW 41.05.017 and 2024 c 251 s 5 and 2024 c 242 s 10 are
27 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

28 Each health plan that provides medical insurance offered under
29 this chapter, including plans created by insuring entities, plans not
30 subject to the provisions of Title 48 RCW, and plans created under
31 RCW 41.05.140, are subject to the provisions of RCW 48.43.500,
32 70.02.045, 48.43.505 through 48.43.535, 48.43.537, 48.43.545,
33 48.43.550, 70.02.110, 70.02.900, 48.43.190, 48.43.083, 48.43.0128,
34 48.43.780, 48.43.435, 48.43.815, 48.200.020 through 48.200.280,
35 48.200.300 through 48.200.320, 48.43.440, section 1 of this act, and
36 chapter 48.49 RCW.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 74.09
38 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) By November 1, 2025, the authority shall apply for
2 authorization from the federal centers for medicare and medicaid
3 services to receive matching federal funds for providing the services
4 covered under this section.

5 (2) Upon federal authorization, the authority and all managed
6 care organizations shall provide coverage to provide treatment of the
7 chronic disease of obesity including, but not limited to:

8 (a) Intensive health behavioral and lifestyle treatment;

9 (b) Metabolic and bariatric surgery; and

10 (c) Food and drug administration-approved obesity medication.

11 (3) Coverage criteria for food and drug administration-approved
12 obesity medications may not be more restrictive than the food and
13 drug administration-approved indications for those treatments.

14 (4) This section does not prohibit the authority and managed care
15 organizations from applying utilization management to determine the
16 medical necessity for treatment of the chronic disease of obesity
17 under this section if appropriateness and medical necessity
18 determinations are made in the same manner as those determinations
19 are made for the treatment of any other illness, condition, or
20 disorder covered by a contract.

21 (5) Intensive health behavior and lifestyle treatment may include
22 interventions certified by or recognized by the centers for disease
23 control and prevention or recommended by current clinical standards
24 of care.

25 (6) For purposes of this section:

26 (a) "Intensive health behavior and lifestyle treatment" means an
27 evidence-based, intensive, multicomponent behavioral or lifestyle
28 modification intervention that supports healthy weight management and
29 is delivered in-person or through telemedicine as defined in RCW
30 74.09.325.

31 (b) "Food and drug administration-approved obesity medication"
32 means any medication approved by the United States food and drug
33 administration with an indication for chronic weight management in
34 patients with an obesity diagnosis.

35 (c) "Metabolic and bariatric surgery" means any surgical
36 intervention included in the most current American society for
37 metabolic and bariatric surgery and international federation for the

- 1 surgery of obesity and metabolic disorders guidelines on indications
- 2 for metabolic and bariatric surgery.

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