
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6228

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Senate Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Mullet, Tom, Keiser, Frockt, Parlette, Hatfield, Cleveland, Fain, Becker, Ericksen, Rolfes, and Pedersen)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/14.

1 AN ACT Relating to transparency tools for consumer information on
2 health care cost and quality; adding a new section to chapter 48.43
3 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Consumers face a challenge finding reliable,
6 consumer friendly information on health care pricing and quality.
7 Greater transparency of health care prices and quality leads to
8 engaged, activated consumers. Research indicates that engaged and
9 educated consumers help control costs and improve quality with lower
10 costs per patient, lower hospital readmission rates, and the use of
11 higher quality providers. Washington is a leader in efforts to develop
12 and publish provider quality information.

13 Although data is available today, research indicates the existing
14 information is not user friendly, consumers do not know which measures
15 are most relevant, and quality ratings are inconsistent or
16 nonstandardized. It is the intent of the legislature to ensure
17 consumer tools are available to educate and engage patients in managing
18 their care and understanding the costs and quality.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 48.43 RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) Each carrier offering a health benefit plan offered or renewed
4 on or after January 1, 2016, must offer member transparency tools with
5 certain price and quality information to enable the member to make
6 treatment decisions based on cost, quality, and patient experience.
7 The transparency tools must aim for best practices and, at a minimum:

8 (a) Must display cost data for common treatments within the
9 following categories:

- 10 (i) In-patient treatments;
- 11 (ii) Outpatient treatments;
- 12 (iii) Diagnostic treatments; and
- 13 (iv) Office visits;

14 (b) Are encouraged to display the cost for prescription medications
15 on their member web site or through a link to a third party that
16 manages the prescription benefits;

17 (c) Must include a patient review option or method for members to
18 provide a rating or feedback on their experience with the medical
19 provider that allows other members to see the patient review;

20 (d) Must allow members to access the estimated cost of the
21 treatment as set forth in (a) of this subsection on a portable
22 electronic device while sitting in the doctor's office;

23 (e) Must display options based on the selected search criteria for
24 members to compare;

25 (f) Must display the estimated cost of the treatment and the
26 estimated out-of-pocket costs of the treatment for the member and
27 display the application of personalized benefits such as deductibles
28 and cost-sharing;

29 (g) Must display quality information on providers when available;
30 and

31 (h) Are encouraged to display alternatives that are more cost-
32 effective when there are alternatives available, such as the use of an
33 ambulatory surgical center when one is available.

34 (2) In addition to the required features on cost and quality
35 information, the member transparency tools must include information to
36 allow a provider search of in-network providers with information
37 including specialists, distance from patient, the provider's contact
38 information, the provider's education, board certification and other

1 credentials, malpractice history and disciplinary actions, affiliated
2 hospitals and other providers in a clinic, and maps and driving
3 directions.

4 (3) Each carrier offering a health benefit plan offered or renewed
5 on or after January 1, 2016, must, within thirty days from the offer or
6 renewal date, attest to the office of the insurance commissioner that
7 the member transparency tools meet the requirements in this section and
8 access to the tools is available on the home page within the health
9 plan's secured member web site.

--- END ---