
Health Care & Wellness Committee

SB 5436

Brief Description: Expanding patient access to health services through telemedicine by further defining where a patient may receive the service.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Cleveland, Frockt and Keiser.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows any location determined by a patient to be an originating site for purposes of reimbursement for telemedicine services.

Hearing Date: 3/10/17

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Telemedicine is the use of interactive audio, video, or electronic media for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment of a patient at an originating site. Store and forward technology is the use of an asynchronous transmission of a patient's medical information from an originating site to a provider at a distant site.

A health plan offered by a health carrier, a health plan offered to state employees and their dependents, and a Medicaid managed care plan must reimburse providers for health care services provided through telemedicine or store and forward technology if:

- the services are covered services;
- the services are medically necessary;
- the services are essential health benefits under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act;
- the services are determined to be safely and effectively provided through telemedicine or store and forward technology according to generally accepted health care practices and standards; and

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- the technology meets state and federal standards governing the privacy and security of protected health information.

An originating site for telemedicine includes a hospital, rural health clinic, federally qualified health center, health care provider's office, community mental health center, skilled nursing center, renal dialysis center, or a home. A facility fee may not be charged for telemedicine services offered to a patient in his or her home.

Summary of Bill:

The list of originating sites for purposes of telemedicine reimbursement is expanded to include any location determined by the individual receiving the service. A facility fee may not be charged for telemedicine services offered to a patient in such a location.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2018.