
Health Care & Wellness Committee

SB 5387

Brief Description: Concerning physician credentialing in telemedicine services.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Cleveland, Rivers, O'Ban, Short, Bailey, Braun, Wilson, L., Warnick, Zeiger, Van De Wege and Keiser.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits an originating site hospital to rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant credentials, when granting or renewing credentials of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services.

Hearing Date: 3/7/19

Staff: Kim Weidenaar (786-7120).

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. 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 their home.

When granting or renewing privileges or association of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services, an originating site hospital may rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew clinical privileges or association of the physician if the originating site hospital obtains written assurances that:

- the distant site hospital is a Medicare participating hospital;
- any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services at the distant site hospital will be fully privileged to provide services by the distant site hospital;

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- the physician holds and maintains a valid license in Washington; and
- the originating site hospital has evidence that the physician was internally reviewed by the distant site hospital and the originating site sends the distant site hospital performance information for use in the periodic review of the distant site physician.

Credentialing is the process of verifying qualifications to ensure current competence to grant privileges. The term credentialing involves verification of education, training, experience, and licensure to provide services. The Medicare Conditions of Participation require hospitals to have a credentialing and privileging process for practitioners providing services within the hospital.

Summary of Bill:

An originating site hospital is permitted to rely upon a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew credentials in the same way that an originating site hospital may rely upon a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew privileges. When granting or renewing credentials of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services, an originating site hospital may rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew credentials, if the originating site hospital obtains written assurances that:

- the distant site hospital is a Medicare participating hospital;
- any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services at the distant site hospital will be fully credentialed to provide services by the distant site hospital;
- the physician holds and maintains a valid license in Washington; and
- the originating site hospital has evidence that the physician was internally reviewed by the distant site hospital and the originating site sends the distant site hospital performance information for use in the periodic review of the distant site physician.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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