
SENATE BILL 5949

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senators Marr and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 02/09/09. Referred to Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection.

1 AN ACT Relating to the centers of occupational health and
2 education; adding a new section to chapter 51.04 RCW; and creating a
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The centers of occupational health and
6 education program has been very successful at reducing costs associated
7 with workers' compensation claims. These savings have come through
8 implementation of best practices by health care providers, employers,
9 and health services coordinator staff, supported by an effective
10 information technology tool. The centers of occupational health and
11 education program has been operating on a pilot basis, limiting access
12 to these services to a small percentage of the Washington employee
13 population and reducing potential cost savings.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 51.04 RCW
15 to read as follows:

16 (1) The department shall, in consultation with the workers'
17 compensation advisory committee, create a statewide centers of
18 occupational health and education program. To establish a statewide

1 program, the department shall by July 1, 2010, contract with one or
2 more qualified vendors to operate the statewide centers of occupational
3 health and education program.

4 (2) The statewide centers of occupational health and education
5 program must:

6 (a) Be modeled on the department's pilot project program developed
7 in the Spokane region;

8 (b) Continue and build upon the centers of occupational health and
9 education currently in place;

10 (c) Preserve a worker's choice of physician;

11 (d) Improve communication between physicians, employers, workers,
12 union, and the department;

13 (e) Make clinical and administrative resources available when and
14 where physicians and workers need them most;

15 (f) Foster community-based workplace injury and illness prevention;

16 (g) Provide reimbursement to physicians for specific services
17 demonstrated through research to improve worker outcomes;

18 (h) Promote free continuing medical education in occupational
19 health practices to help physicians in the community to gain expertise
20 in disability prevention; and

21 (i) Track quality indicators and worker outcomes and provide
22 feedback to participating physicians.

23 (3) A vendor or vendors who are contracted under subsection (1) of
24 this section must use best practices in implementing and operating the
25 centers of occupational health and education program. This includes,
26 but is not limited to:

27 (a) Having available for immediate implementation a web-based
28 information technology tool that allows multiple parties to have access
29 to a claim;

30 (b) Conducting health services coordination in a manner that meets
31 the needs and challenges of geographic disparities; and

32 (c) Supporting provider and office staff education through academic
33 detailing rather than a dependence on didactic continuing education
34 formats.

35 (4) The department must report annually beginning December 31,
36 2009, on the implementation of this section. The report must include:
37 The centers of occupational health and education payment model; an

- 1 analysis of the system-wide changes or improvements, or both, and their
- 2 impact on operations costs and resources; and program outcomes.

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