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ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5179

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Bailey, Keiser, Palumbo, Hasegawa, and Conway)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring coverage for hearing instruments  
2 under public employee and medicaid programs; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 41.05 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW; and  
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 41.05  
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) Subject to appropriation, a health plan offered to employees  
9 and their covered dependents under this chapter issued or renewed on  
10 or after January 1, 2019, must include coverage for hearing  
11 instruments. Coverage must include a new hearing instrument every  
12 five years and services and supplies such as the initial assessment,  
13 fitting, adjustment, and auditory training.

14 (2) The hearing instrument must be recommended by a licensed  
15 audiologist or hearing aid specialist and dispensed by a licensed  
16 audiologist or hearing aid specialist.

17 (3) For the purposes of this section, "hearing instrument" and  
18 "hearing aid specialist" have the same meaning as defined in RCW  
19 18.35.010.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 74.09  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) The medical assistance coverage offered under this chapter  
4    issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2019, must include coverage  
5    for hearing instruments when medically necessary. Coverage must  
6    include a new hearing instrument every five years, a new hearing  
7    instrument when alterations to the existing hearing instrument cannot  
8    meet the needs of the patient, and services and supplies such as the  
9    initial assessment, fitting, adjustment, and auditory training.

10       (2) The hearing instrument must be recommended by a licensed  
11    audiologist or hearing aid specialist and dispensed by a licensed  
12    audiologist or hearing aid specialist.

13       (3) For purposes of this section, "hearing instrument" and  
14    "hearing aid specialist" have the same meaning as defined in RCW  
15    18.35.010.

16       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    If specific funding for the purposes of  
17    section 2 of this act, referencing section 2 of this act by bill or  
18    chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2018,  
19    in the omnibus appropriations act, section 2 of this act is null and  
20    void.

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