Washington State
House of Representatives
Office of Program Research

BILL ANALYSIS

Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1430

Brief Description: Concerning advanced practice registered nurse and physician assistant reimbursement.

Sponsors: Representatives Simmons, Leavitt, Macri, Thai, Tharinger, Parshley, Reeves, Alvarado, Pollet, Rule, Stonier, Berg, Street, Goodman, Ormsby, Mena, Farivar, Entenman, Fosse, Callan, Davis, Ramel, Taylor, Lekanoff, Berry, Reed, Shavers, Cortes, Fey, Salahuddin and Hill.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires health carriers providing private health plans to reimburse advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants at the same rate as physicians for providing the same service in the same service area.

Hearing Date: 1/29/25

Staff: Kim Weidenaar (786-7120).

Background:

"Advanced registered nursing practice" is defined as the performance of the acts of a registered nurse and the performance of an expanded role in providing health care services recognized by the medical and nursing professions. Advanced registered nurse practitioners (ARNPs) are authorized to perform all activities registered nurses perform, perform specialized and advanced levels of nursing, and prescribe legend drugs and certain controlled substances. An ARNP's scope of practice is defined by the Washington State Board of Nursing and includes: examining and diagnosing patients; admitting, managing, and discharging patients to and from health care facilities; ordering, collecting, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests; managing health

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care by identifying, developing, implementing, and evaluating a plan of care and treatment for patients; prescribing therapies and medical equipment; prescribing medications when granted prescriptive authority; and referring patients to other health care practitioners, services, or facilities. In 2024 the title for ARNPs was changed to advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), but the title change is not in effect until June 30, 2027.

A physician assistant (PA) is a person who is licensed by the Washington Medical Commission to practice medicine under the terms of one or more collaboration agreements. A collaboration agreement is a written agreement that describes the manner in which a physician assistant is supervised by or collaborates with at least one physician, which must be signed by the physician assistant and one or more physicians or the physician assistant's employer. Physician assistants may practice in any area of medicine or surgery as long as the practice is not beyond the scope of expertise and clinical practice of the participating physician or physicians within the department or specialty areas in which the physician assistant practices. The participating physician or the physician assistant's employer, and the physician assistant must determine which procedures may be performed and the degree of autonomy under which the procedure is performed.

Summary of Bill:

For private health plans issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2026, a health carrier may not reimburse a contracted APRN or PA in an amount less than the allowed amount that the health carrier would reimburse for the same service if provided by a contracted physician or osteopathic physician in the same service area. A health carrier may not reduce the reimbursement amount paid to physicians and osteopathic physicians to comply with this requirement.

The Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) must collect data from health carriers on the implementation of this requirement beginning January 1, 2026. By July 1, 2027, the OIC must report to the Legislature on the number of insurers who have changed their reimbursement policy because of these requirements, the number of APRNs or PAs whose reimbursement increased, the number of physicians whose reimbursement decreased, and the cost to insurers to implement these requirements. These requirements do not apply to APRNs or PAs who are employees of a health maintenance organization.

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.