

WSR 24-17-067

INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT

HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

[Filed August 15, 2024, 3:40 p.m.]

Interpretive Statement (IS)

IS Number: IS-24-01.

Issuing Entity: Washington state health care authority (HCA).

Subject Matter: Clarifying requirements in WAC 182-531-1600

(9) (b) Bariatric surgery.

Effective Date: August 15, 2024.

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HCA is filing this IS under the authority of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (RCW 34.05.230). This IS clarifies HCA's interpretation of WAC 182-531-1600 (9) (b); specifically, who can perform the internal medicine evaluation.

This rule was last updated in 2013 and HCA intends to propose amendments to the rule under the APA (in the near future). The amendments will codify what already is HCA's interpretation and administration of the rule.

For the purpose of WAC 182-531-1600 (9) (b) only, HCA interprets the term "*internist*" to include family physicians with or without obstetrics, internal-medicine/pediatric physicians, geriatricians, pediatrics, as well as qualified advance practice providers such as advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants.

The amended rule, as with HCA's current interpretation, will provide greater access to providers, including a client's primary care provider, who can provide equally effective assessments of the client's readiness for surgery.