

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1503

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to health care for persons receiving public assistance.

Brief Description: Providing chiropractic services to persons receiving public assistance.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Morris, Carlson, Hymes, D. Schmidt, Appelwick, Mastin, Jacobsen, Carrell, Robertson, Conway, Schoesler, Mason, Beeksma, Kremen, Thompson, Smith, Lambert, Kessler, McMahan and Quall.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/23/95, 2/24/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Hymes, Vice Chairman; Dellwo, Ranking Minority Member; Cody, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Casada; Conway; Crouse; Kessler; Morris and Sherstad.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: The purpose of the state Medical Assistance program is to ensure access to medically necessary services for low income clients eligible for state and federal medical assistance programs. It is operated by the Department of Social and Health Services in partnership with the federal Medicaid program.

The department may include a range of medical and health services such as physician, hospital, nursing, medical care, or any other type of remedial care established by the secretary.

There is no specific reference for chiropractic care.

The law otherwise references the provision of some health care services. Personal care services must be included. However, routine foot care, or dental services not mandated by the federal Medicaid program cannot be included without specific appropriations. Hospice services must be offered within available funds. But the

department may not cut off prescription services, oxygen supplies, respiratory services, or other life-sustaining medical services or supplies.

Summary of Bill: Chiropractic services must be offered in the state Medical Assistance program. The secretary may condition these services with such measures as peer or utilization review, care plans, or limitations of treatment in order to contain costs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 19, 1995.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Chiropractic care is utilized by many people and may displace more expensive care by physicians.

Testimony Against: This would require more funding and would increase costs.

Testified: Steve Wehrly, David Mittendorf and Jim Caviezei, Washington Chiropractic Association (pro); Jane Beyer, Medical Assistance, Department of Social and Health Services (con); Janice Skinner, Active Disabilities of Grays Harbor (pro); and Carl Nelson, Washington State Medical Association (con).