ANALYSIS OF HOUSE BILL 2482

Accessing specialty health care services.

SPONSORS: Representatives Cross and Sump.

PURPOSE: To establish a mandate benefit for certain types of hospital consultations.

BACKGROUND: For the most part, physicians access a second opinion or consultation from teaching and tertiary care hospitals depends on the coverage included in patients' health plans and hospital location, which may cause inconsistencies in access. For example, Seattle physicians are likely to get a second opinion from University Hospital, whereas their counterparts in rural areas of Eastern Washington. Proponents of this measure feel that this is unfair because most of these hospitals are supported from taxes drawn from all regions of the state.

SUMMARY: The Administrator of public employee benefit plans and the Basic Health Plan and every health carrier that offers or provides coverage for hospital services must permit doctors of Medicine and Osteopathy who is treating a covered person to timely access consultations from certain teaching and tertiary care hospitals, University, Harborview, Children's in Seattle, Mary Bridge in Tacoma..

Carriers may establish administrative procedures for this access.

Standards of medical care are not established and unnecessary medical services are authorized.

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