

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5675

As of February 20, 1997

Title: An act relating to medical rehabilitation services.

Brief Description: Including medical rehabilitation services as an essential health service of the uniform benefits package and the basic health plan.

Sponsors: Senators Wood, Fairley, Kline and Kohl.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/21/97.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Don Sloma (786-7319)

Background: The Basic Health Plan (BHP) is a state purchased program which provides subsidized and unsubsidized enrollment in a resident's choice of several privately operated, managed health care plans, all offering the same package of basic medical insurance. BHP insured services include hospital care, outpatient treatment, prescription drugs, preventive care, and emergency medical services. Those whose family incomes are less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive enrollment subsidies.

The Health Care Authority administrator has statutory authority to establish and revise the schedule of BHP covered services including physician services, hospital services, prescription drugs and medications. Mental health, chemical dependency and organ transplant services may also be included. At present, there is no specific statutory guidance regarding inclusion of medical rehabilitation services in the list of BHP covered services.

Medical rehabilitation is a term encompassing a number of specialized services designed to restore the functioning of the human body following illness or injury. The services may be administered in hospital settings, in nursing homes, or in various outpatient or community settings. These specialized services include speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

Summary of Bill: The list of health services which must be included in the Basic Health Plan is expanded to include medical rehabilitation services in all settings.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 12, 1997.

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