
SENATE BILL 5471

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Senators Wojahn, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Winsley, Bauer, Long, Franklin, Kline, Loveland, Jacobsen, Snyder, Kohl, Spanel, Fraser, Fairley, McAuliffe and Brown

Read first time 01/28/97. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to osteoporosis health services coverage; adding a
2 new section to chapter 41.05 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 48.20
3 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 48.21 RCW; adding a new section to
4 chapter 48.44 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 48.46 RCW; and
5 creating new sections.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** This act may be known and cited as the
8 "osteoporosis health services coverage act."

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature finds the following:

10 (a) Osteoporosis affects twenty-five million Americans and each
11 year results in one and one-half million fractures of the hip, spine,
12 wrist, and other bones, costing the nation at least ten billion
13 dollars;

14 (b) Osteoporosis progresses silently, in most cases undiagnosed
15 until a fracture occurs, and once a fracture occurs the disease is
16 already advanced and the likelihood is high that another fracture will
17 occur;

1 (c) Half of all women and twenty percent of men will suffer a
2 fracture due to osteoporosis;

3 (d) Since osteoporosis progresses silently and has no cure,
4 prevention and early diagnosis are key to reducing the prevalence and
5 devastation of this disease;

6 (e) Medical experts agree that osteoporosis is highly preventable
7 and treatable. However, once the disease progresses to the point of
8 fracture, its associated consequences often lead to disability and
9 institutionalization and exact a heavy toll on quality of life;

10 (f) Given the current national focus on health care reform and
11 reducing unnecessary health care expenditures through the use of health
12 promotion and disease prevention programs, mandating coverage of
13 services related to prevention, early diagnosis, and timely treatment
14 of osteoporosis is a cost-effective approach for states to embrace;

15 (g) Bone mass measurement is the only way to detect the presence of
16 low bone mass and to assess the individual's risk for fracture and this
17 aids in selecting appropriate therapies and interventions; ordinary x-
18 rays are not sensitive enough to detect osteoporosis until twenty-five
19 to forty percent of bone mass has been lost and the disease is far
20 advanced;

21 (h) Currently available technologies for bone mass measurement
22 include: Single and dual-photon absorptiometry; single and dual energy
23 x-ray absorptiometry; quantitative computed tomography; and
24 radiographic absorptiometry. Other technologies for measuring bone
25 mass are under investigation and may become scientifically proven
26 technologies in the future; and

27 (i) Other services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and
28 treatment of osteoporosis, including visits to health care
29 professionals and reimbursement for scientifically proven technologies
30 for bone mass measurement and United States food and drug
31 administration-approved medications, can be used effectively to reduce
32 the cost and pain that osteoporosis inflicts upon its victims.

33 (2) To mandate coverage for services related to the prevention,
34 diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis, including, but not limited
35 to, visits to health care professionals, reimbursement for
36 scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is bone density
37 testing, and United States food and drug administration-approved
38 medications, to prevent fractures associated with osteoporosis.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 41.05 RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) All state-purchased health care that provides hospital,
4 medical, or surgical coverage shall include coverage for qualified
5 individuals for services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and
6 treatment of osteoporosis. The services may include, but are not
7 limited to, visits to health care professionals, reimbursement for
8 scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is bone density
9 testing, and United States food and drug administration-approved
10 medications.

11 (2) State-purchased health care shall identify and use the most up-
12 to-date, scientifically accurate educational materials to increase
13 patient awareness and encourage the prevention of osteoporosis.

14 (3) The definitions in section 4 of this act apply to this section.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 48.20 RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in
18 this section apply to section 5 of this act.

19 (1) "Bone mass measurement" means a radiologic or radioisotopic
20 procedure or other scientifically proven technologies performed on an
21 individual for the purpose of detecting bone loss.

22 (2) "Qualified individual" means:

23 (a) An estrogen-deficient woman at clinical risk for osteoporosis;

24 (b) An individual with vertebral abnormalities;

25 (c) An individual receiving long-term glucocorticoid, which is
26 steroid, therapy;

27 (d) An individual with primary hyperparathyroidism; or

28 (e) An individual being monitored to assess the response to or
29 efficacy of approved osteoporosis drug therapies.

30 (3) "Services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment
31 of osteoporosis" means visits to health care professionals,
32 reimbursement for scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is
33 bone density testing, and United States food and drug administration-
34 approved medications. Optional additional services to be covered are:
35 Psychological counseling, rehabilitation services, occupational
36 therapy, case management, home care, and prosthetic devices.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 48.20 RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) An insurer that offers to any individual a health benefit plan
4 that provides hospital, medical, or surgical coverage shall include
5 coverage for qualified individuals for services related to the
6 prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis. The services may
7 include, but are not limited to, visits to health care professionals,
8 reimbursement for scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is
9 bone density testing, and United States food and drug administration-
10 approved medications.

11 (2) An insurer that offers to any individual a health benefit plan
12 shall identify and use the most up-to-date, scientifically accurate
13 educational materials to increase patient awareness and encourage the
14 prevention of osteoporosis.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 48.21 RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 (1) A group insurance contract or blanket disability insurance
18 contract providing health care services that provides hospital,
19 medical, or surgical coverage shall include coverage for qualified
20 individuals for services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and
21 treatment of osteoporosis. The services may include, but are not
22 limited to, visits to health care professionals, reimbursement for
23 scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is bone density
24 testing, and United States food and drug administration-approved
25 medications.

26 (2) A contract shall identify and use the most up-to-date,
27 scientifically accurate educational materials to increase patient
28 awareness and encourage the prevention of osteoporosis.

29 (3) The definitions in section 4 of this act apply to this section.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 48.44 RCW
31 to read as follows:

32 (1) A health service contractor that provides hospital, medical, or
33 surgical coverage shall include coverage for qualified individuals for
34 services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of
35 osteoporosis. The services may include, but are not limited to, visits
36 to health care professionals, reimbursement for scientifically proven

1 bone mass measurement, which is bone density testing, and United States
2 food and drug administration-approved medications.

3 (2) The contractor shall identify and use the most up-to-date,
4 scientifically accurate educational materials to increase patient
5 awareness and encourage the prevention of osteoporosis.

6 (3) The definitions in section 4 of this act apply to this section.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 48.46 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 (1) A health maintenance organization that provides hospital,
10 medical, or surgical coverage shall include coverage for qualified
11 individuals for services related to the prevention, diagnosis, and
12 treatment of osteoporosis. The services may include, but are not
13 limited to, visits to health care professionals, reimbursement for
14 scientifically proven bone mass measurement, which is bone density
15 testing, and United States food and drug administration-approved
16 medications.

17 (2) A health maintenance organization shall identify and use the
18 most up-to-date, scientifically accurate educational materials to
19 increase patient awareness and encourage the prevention of
20 osteoporosis.

21 (3) The definitions in section 4 of this act apply to this section.

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