
SENATE BILL 6855

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Senators Thibaudeau and Costa

Read first time 02/18/2000. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to insurance coverage for the treatment of social
2 anxiety disorder; adding a new section to Title 48 RCW; and creating a
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares that:

6 (1) Social anxiety disorder is the most common anxiety disorder
7 affecting approximately 7.9 percent of Americans annually with a
8 lifetime prevalence of 13.3 percent.

9 (2) Patients with social anxiety disorder are at a fourfold
10 increased risk of developing depression, and are three times more
11 likely to develop panic, and two times more likely to suffer from
12 alcoholism, as persons without the disorder.

13 (3) Patients with social anxiety disorder are twice as likely to
14 attempt suicide as those persons without the disorder.

15 (4) Social anxiety disorder has been scientifically linked to
16 reduced quality of life, lower education attainment, and impairment of
17 professional advancement and wage earning ability.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to Title 48 RCW to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) Every health care service plan contract that provides mental
4 health benefit coverage and that is issued, amended, delivered, or
5 renewed on or after January 1, 2001, must include coverage for
6 medically necessary treatment of social anxiety disorder.

7 (2) A provision in any plan contract issued, amended, delivered, or
8 renewed on or after January 1, 2001, that is in conflict with this
9 section is of no force or effect.

10 (3) As used in this section, "social anxiety disorder" means a
11 condition that meets the criteria for generalized social phobia set
12 forth in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,
13 Fourth Edition, of the American psychiatric association.

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