
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2154

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Wood, Conway, Anderson, Tom, Ericksen and McCoy)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to criteria for coverage of spinal cord stimulators
2 and drug infusion pumps by the department of labor and industries;
3 adding a new section to chapter 51.36 RCW; creating a new section; and
4 declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

7 (1) Spinal cord stimulators are effective sources of pain relief
8 for patients with chronic pain conditions and are covered by forty-nine
9 of fifty state industrial insurance programs as well as medicare,
10 medicaid, and all major private insurers in the state of Washington.
11 Many Washington self-insurers cover the machines under their industrial
12 insurance as well.

13 (2) Patients cannot be expected to return to a productive life or
14 carry out the activities of daily living if they are in severe chronic
15 pain. Pain control is an essential feature of any muscular-skeletal
16 rehabilitation regimen. Spinal cord stimulators are often preferable
17 to the administration of oral narcotics because they dramatically
18 reduce the adverse side effects of narcotics.

1 (3) Recent advances in medical technology have substantially
2 improved the life and performance of the implanted devices.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 51.36 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 (1) The department shall develop treatment guidelines for spinal
6 cord stimulators at least in accordance with relevant standards adopted
7 by national payors and most state industrial insurance programs.
8 Nothing in this section prevents the department from making informed
9 decisions about the appropriateness of the device in a specific case in
10 accordance with the standards referred to in this section.

11 (2) For the purposes of this section, "spinal cord stimulator"
12 means a device that delivers low voltage electrical stimulation to the
13 spinal cord to block the sensation of pain. The device is implantable
14 and consists of a lead that delivers the stimulation to the spinal cord
15 and an extension wire that conducts electrical pulses from the battery
16 power source to the lead. The device covers or masks the sensation of
17 pain with a tingling sensation.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate
19 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
20 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
21 immediately.

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