
Health Care Committee

HB 2573

Brief Description: Adopting health information technology to improve quality of care..

Sponsors: Representatives Morrell, Wallace, Clibborn, Cody, Flannigan, Simpson, Green, Ormsby, Springer, Kilmer, Moeller, Kagi and Conway; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Health Care Authority to promote and increase the adoption of health information technology systems in hospitals.
- Directs the Health Care Authority to coordinate a strategy for the adoption of health information technology systems.

Hearing Date: 1/19/06

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The State Health Care Authority (Authority) is the state agency which administers state employee insurance benefits and the Basic Health Plan, which is the state subsidized health insurance program for low income persons. The Authority is also generally responsible for coordinating the study and implementation of state initiatives regarding health care cost containment. This includes using evidence-based medicine in its contracts in order to develop performance measures and financial incentives related to chronic disease and health information technology.

In 2005 the Authority was directed to establish the Washington Health Information Infrastructure Advisory Board (Board). The Authority is required to collaborate with the Board to develop a strategy for the adoption and use of electronic medical records and health information technologies. The Authority and the Board have issued their preliminary report and the final report is due December 1, 2006.

Summary of Bill:

When contracting for state-purchased health care and considering options for cost containment and delivery alternatives in state-purchased health care programs, the Authority must promote and increase the adoption of health information technology systems in hospitals. The Authority may achieve this through reimbursement and state health purchasing strategies as well as pilots. The health information technology systems must:

- facilitate diagnosis or treatment;
- reduce unnecessary duplication of medical tests;
- promote efficient electronic physician order entry;
- increase access to health information for consumers and their providers; and
- improve health outcomes.

The Authority must coordinate a strategy for the adoption of health information technology systems based on the final report and recommendations of the Authority and Board due in December 2006. It is the stated intent of the bill to encourage all hospitals to adopt health information technologies by 2012.

The Authority is authorized to accept grants, gifts, and other payments to implement authorized initiatives and strategies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 2006.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.