

**HB 2574-S - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Provides that, for persons with no third-party coverage and with family income up to four hundred percent of the federal poverty guidelines, hospitals must provide a discount for any charges for services provided in the hospital.

Requires each hospital to provide notice to patients of its charity care policies. At a minimum, each hospital must post prominently in locations easily accessible to and visible by patients, including its web site, and in the bill sent to patients, a notice stating that charges for services to people meeting the charity care or discount criteria may be waived or reduced, and regarding the availability of charity care and how to qualify. A notice of charity care policies also may be provided to patients prior to discharge. Posted notices must be in English and also in the five languages other than English that are most frequently spoken in the hospital's service area. The notice must use clear language that would be easily understood by individuals with limited education.

Provides that, upon a determination by a hospital that a person without third-party coverage is eligible for a sliding fee schedule or other discount under RCW 70.170.060, the hospital shall offer that person the option to pay his or her bill in reasonable installments that take into account the person's income, assets, and other financial obligations. Interest rates for installment payment plans shall not exceed the rate the hospital pays to borrow working capital.