
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

HB 2549

Brief Description: Establishing patient-centered primary care pilots.

Sponsors: Representatives Seaquist, Lantz, Morrell, Lias, Barlow and Green.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Health Care Authority to provide funding and technical assistance to primary care providers who adopt and maintain medical homes.

Hearing Date: 1/17/08

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

A primary care practice serves as the patient's first point of entry into the health care system and as the continuing focal point for all needed health care services. Primary care practices provide patients with ready access to their own personal physician or to an established back-up physician when the primary physician is not available. The structure of the primary care practice may include a team of physicians and non-physician health professionals.

Primary care practices provide health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, counseling, patient education, diagnosis, and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses in a variety of health care settings (e.g., office, inpatient, critical care, long-term care, home care, day care, etc.).

Primary care practices are organized to meet the needs of patients with undifferentiated problems, with the vast majority of patient concerns and needs being cared for in the primary care practice itself. Primary care practices are generally located in the community of the patients, thereby facilitating access to health care while maintaining a wide variety of specialty and institutional consultative and referral relationships for specific care needs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The Health Care Authority (Authority) is required to develop a project to provide funding and technical assistance to primary care providers who adopt and maintain medical home models of practice. The project will include consultation related to improving office workflow and techniques in efficient, cost-effective, patient-centered integrated health care. The project will include signing bonuses or other incentives to increase the number of primary care providers. Funding will be provided for health information technology models in primary care practices.

The Authority will report to appropriate committees of the legislature on the progress and outcomes of the project with an interim report by January 1, 2009 and a final report by December 31, 2011. The Authority will also report its findings on changing reimbursement for primary care and a time line for adoption of payment and provider performance strategies by January 1, 2009. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) is required to evaluate the current supply and scope of service of primary care providers in the state, and determine the barriers to and the benefits of increasing the use of a medical home model. The OFM study will be reported to appropriate committees of the legislature by July 1, 2009.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

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