

**SB 5619-S - DIGEST**

(AS OF SENATE 2ND READING 3/14/2007)

Finds that unwarranted variations in health care, variations not explained by illness, patient preference, or the dictates of evidence-based medicine, are a significant feature of health care in Washington state. There is growing evidence that, for preference-sensitive care involving elective surgery, the quality of patient-practitioner communication about the benefits, harms, and uncertainty of available treatment options can be improved by introducing high-quality decision aids that encourage shared decision making.

Declares an intent to focus on improving the quality of patient-practitioner communication and on increasing the extent to which patients make genuinely informed, preference-based treatment decisions.

Requires the state health care authority to work in collaboration with the health professions and quality improvement communities to increase awareness of appropriate, high-quality decision aids, and to train physicians and other practitioners in their use.