
SENATE BILL 5695

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Becker, Dammeier, Cleveland, Keiser, Schlicher, Frockt, Mullet, and McAuliffe

Read first time 02/08/13. Referred to Committee on Health Care .

1 AN ACT Relating to wellness programs offered by a health carrier;
2 adding a new section to chapter 48.43 RCW; adding a new section to
3 chapter 48.30 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the rise of
6 chronic disease and poor health habits are contributing to rising
7 healthcare costs. Wellness programs that encourage healthier living or
8 help individuals to maintain and improve their health can reduce
9 healthcare costs and improve overall health. Studies also show that
10 financial incentives encourage greater participation in wellness
11 programs.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 48.43 RCW
13 to read as follows:

14 (1) A carrier may offer or sponsor a wellness program that is not
15 part of the health benefit plan or health benefit contract to a person
16 or employer, and a carrier may include incentives as part of the
17 wellness program. Examples of incentives include gift cards for goods
18 or services, or health-related goods or services.

1 (2) In order to offer a wellness program, the following must be
2 met:

3 (a) The program must be available to individuals under similar
4 qualifying circumstances;

5 (b) A detailed description of the program and incentive must be
6 provided to individuals prior to participation and upon request; and

7 (c) The health carrier must provide information to individuals that
8 the wellness program does not constitute a health benefit plan.

9 (3) Any wellness program and incentives offered under this section
10 must be available for review upon request by the insurance
11 commissioner.

12 (4) For purposes of this section, a "wellness program" is a program
13 of health promotion or disease prevention designed to promote healthy
14 behaviors or lifestyles and improve an individual's overall well-being
15 or awareness. A wellness program may include, but is not limited to:
16 A biometric screening or an online health assessment; a program
17 designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, physical activity, or healthy
18 eating; a coaching program; a smoking cessation program; a program
19 designed to reduce alcohol misuse; a weight reduction or management
20 program; and nutrition education.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 48.30 RCW
22 to read as follows:

23 RCW 48.30.140 and 48.30.150 do not apply to section 2 of this act.

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