
Health Care & Wellness Committee

SSB 5448

Brief Description: Requiring a study of the effects long-term antibiotic therapy has on certain Lyme disease patients.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senator Hatfield).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Medical Quality Assurance Commission to study the effects of long-term antibiotic therapy on patients who have been diagnosed with Post-Treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome.

Hearing Date: 3/18/15

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection caused by the *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacterium and spread through tick bites. Symptoms of the disease include fever, headache, fatigue, and rash. An untreated infection can spread to the joints, heart, and nervous system. Lyme Disease is generally treated with antibiotics. The persistence of symptoms after treatment is known as Post-Treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome (PTLDS). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were 11 confirmed cases of Lyme disease in Washington in 2013.

Summary of Bill:

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) must study the effects of long-term antibiotic therapy on patients who have been diagnosed with PTLDS. The study should include a review of:

- the antibiotics that are commonly used, prescribed, and administered for the long-term treatment of Lyme Disease;
- the side effects associated with long-term antibiotic therapy;

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- long-term antibiotic therapy's effectiveness in controlling the symptoms of patients with PTLDS;
- whether allowing physicians to administer long-term antibiotic therapy for treating Lyme Disease would be beneficial to the health and safety of Washington residents; and
- any other aspects of long-term antibiotic therapy that the MQAC deems important to the health and safety of patients who may receive the treatments.

The MQAC must report its findings to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 2015.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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