

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5387

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to physician credentialing in telemedicine services.

Brief Description: Concerning physician credentialing in telemedicine services.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Cleveland, Rivers, O'Ban, Short, Bailey, Braun, Wilson, L.,
Warnick, Zeiger, Van De Wege and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 3/7/19, 3/20/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits an originating site hospital to rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant credentials, when granting or renewing credentials of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Davis, DeBolt, Harris, Jinkins, Maycumber, Riccelli, Robinson, Stonier, Thai and Tharinger.

Staff: Kim Weidenaar (786-7120).

Background:

Telemedicine is the use of interactive audio, video, or electronic media for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment of a patient at an originating site. Store and forward technology is the use of an asynchronous transmission of a patient's medical information from an originating site to a provider at a distant site. An originating site for telemedicine includes a hospital, rural health clinic, federally qualified health center, health care provider's office, community mental health center, skilled nursing center, renal dialysis center, or a

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home. A facility fee may not be charged for telemedicine services offered to a patient in their home.

When granting or renewing privileges or association of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services, an originating site hospital may rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew clinical privileges or association of the physician if the originating site hospital obtains written assurances that:

- the distant site hospital is a Medicare participating hospital;
- any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services at the distant site hospital will be fully privileged to provide services by the distant site hospital;
- the physician holds and maintains a valid license in Washington; and
- the originating site hospital has evidence that the physician was internally reviewed by the distant site hospital and the originating site sends the distant site hospital performance information for use in the periodic review of the distant site physician.

Credentialing is the process of verifying qualifications to ensure current competence to grant privileges. The term credentialing involves verification of education, training, experience, and licensure to provide services. The Medicare Conditions of Participation require hospitals to have a credentialing and privileging process for practitioners providing services within the hospital.

Summary of Bill:

An originating site hospital is permitted to rely upon a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew credentials in the same way that an originating site hospital may rely upon a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew privileges. When granting or renewing credentials of any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services, an originating site hospital may rely on a distant site hospital's decision to grant or renew credentials, if the originating site hospital obtains written assurances that:

- the distant site hospital is a Medicare participating hospital;
- any physician providing telemedicine or store and forward services at the distant site hospital will be fully credentialed to provide services by the distant site hospital;
- the physician holds and maintains a valid license in Washington; and
- the originating site hospital has evidence that the physician was internally reviewed by the distant site hospital and the originating site sends the distant site hospital performance information for use in the periodic review of the distant site physician.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The telemedicine collaborative has some of the greatest minds in Washington working on bringing telemedicine forward in Washington. Credentialing is a fairly repetitive and redundant process, since other facilities you work with are going through the same process. While this bill only applies to physicians performing telemedicine services, it will streamline the credentialing process.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) This statute is designed to protect patient safety, but it protects patients only from services provided by physicians. When these laws were written few advanced registered nurse practitioners (ARNPs) practiced in hospitals, but that is not the case today. Some request support for House Bill 1432, as they believe House Bill 1432 would strengthen the changes that are being made in this bill by applying the requirements uniformly to ARNPs and physician assistants as well.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Becker, prime sponsor.

(Other) Devon Conner-Green, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners United of Washington State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.