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**HOUSE BILL 1545**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Parshley, Schmick, Davis, Ortiz-Self, Ryu, Macri, Ormsby, Scott, Hill, and Doglio

AN ACT Relating to improving cardiac and stroke outcomes through data-driven continuous quality and system improvement; adding a new chapter to Title 70 RCW; and recodifying RCW 70.168.150.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature intends to implement the recommendations of the emergency cardiac and stroke system assessment directed by chapter 58, Laws of 2022 to support efforts to improve emergency cardiac and stroke care in Washington and reduce death and disability resulting from cardiac and stroke events. This includes developing an inclusive system of optimal cardiac and stroke care throughout the continuum of care delivery. Coordinated health care delivery systems require ongoing levels of oversight, evidence-based inputs, coordination, and evaluation of performance. Accordingly, the legislature intends that the department has the responsibility for oversight and coordination of the statewide cardiac and stroke system of care.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of health.

(2) "Emergency medical services providers" means ambulance services and aid services licensed under chapter 18.73 RCW.

(3) "Hospital" means a hospital licensed under chapter 70.41 RCW.

(4) "Registry" means the statewide cardiac and stroke registry established in section 4 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department shall coordinate the statewide cardiac and stroke system of care including developing care system standards, stroke and cardiac center categorization, data collection, and care system performance evaluation.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department shall establish and coordinate the statewide cardiac and stroke registry.

(2) The registry must include information related to systems of care for heart attack, sudden cardiac arrest, and stroke, as submitted by emergency medical services providers and hospitals, and obtained through existing data sources, including cardiac and stroke registries.

(a) The department shall define, in rule, specific data elements to be reported to the registry and standards for data submission. In selecting data to be reported, the department shall identify data elements relevant to assessing the timeliness of the care delivered to patients experiencing a heart attack, sudden cardiac arrest, or stroke and evaluating performance on nationally recognized measures, including care delivered by emergency medical services providers and hospitals, as well as patient outcomes.

(b) The department shall establish a data validation process for the registry and implement a plan for continuous data quality improvement.

(c) The department shall minimize the creation of new reporting requirements by using existing data sources, when possible, and coordinating with state and national organizations involved in cardiac and stroke quality improvement. The department is authorized to enter into any necessary data-sharing agreements required for this purpose.

(3) Beginning July 1, 2027:

(a) Hospitals shall submit data required pursuant to this section on a quarterly basis to the department; and

(b) Emergency medical services providers shall submit data required pursuant to this section to the department through the Washington emergency medical services information system.

(4) The department shall provide technical assistance to emergency medical services and trauma regions and hospitals, including technical assistance in areas such as critical access hospitals that are currently lacking in data submissions affiliated with any existing registry, where applicable.

(5)(a) Beginning July 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the department shall provide a summary report of the data collected pursuant to this section and an analysis of the statewide progress toward improving quality of care and patient outcomes. All data must be reported in the aggregate form and shall be posted on the department's website and submitted to the governor and the relevant committees of the legislature.

(b) The 2028 report required by (a) of this subsection must include an analysis of the data collected and recommendations regarding whether on-site verification of hospitals' adherence to cardiac and stroke standards of care is needed to improve all citizens' access to safe, timely, evidence-based care for stroke, acute coronary syndrome, and cardiac arrest.

(6) The department may adopt rules to implement the requirements of this section, as necessary.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department shall:

(1) Establish and implement a plan for achieving continuous quality improvement in the care provided under the statewide system for cardiac and stroke response and treatment. The department must develop and implement the systemwide plan using the registry and other data sources available to the department;

(2) Establish a system performance oversight process using data from the registry;

(3) Analyze data concerning cardiac and stroke response and treatment and identify areas in need of improvement;

(4) Provide quarterly reports on cardiac and stroke system performance and quality of care measures to the emergency cardiac and stroke technical advisory committee of the emergency medical services and trauma care steering committee created in RCW 70.168.020;

(5) Provide recommendations to the emergency medical services and trauma care steering committee and the legislature for the improvement of cardiac and stroke care and delivery in the state;

(6) Provide aggregate cardiac and stroke data feedback to participating emergency medical services and trauma regions and hospitals;

(7) Provide quality improvement assistance to emergency medical services, hospitals, and emergency medical services and trauma regions to improve performance on care and system coordination;

(8) Use data from the registry to further the development of cardiac and stroke system standards and education; and

(9) Identify and disseminate interventions to improve cardiac and stroke care in prehospital and hospital settings and in local and regional systems of care.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Within funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall assist critical access and rural hospitals in securing the necessary data platforms to meet the department's data collection requirements and support prehospital services, particularly in rural areas, in acquiring improved equipment and additional personnel training for the treatment of cardiac and stroke patients.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Within funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall conduct public education on the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke and the lifesaving benefits of calling 911 and seeking immediate treatment.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Data elements related to the identification of individual patients', providers', and facilities' care outcomes shall be confidential, are not subject to disclosure under the public records act, chapter 42.56 RCW, and shall not be subject to discovery by subpoena or admissible as evidence.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 70.168.150 is recodified as a section in chapter 70.--- RCW (the new chapter created in section 10 of this act).

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 8 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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