

HB 2981 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Prepared By: Tom MacDonald, Budget Analyst

Meeting Dates: 6/7, 6/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines "interdisciplinary team" as a group of health care professionals who are trained or certified in palliative care. Authorizes Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to administer a program to provide palliative care services through coordinated care organizations. Directs OHA to define eligibility requirements and provider qualifications for palliative care services in rule. Specifies residential care or skilled nursing facilities are not subject to rules promulgated by OHA.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Merits of the bill

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Palliative care means patient-centered and family-centered medical care that optimizes a patient's quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating the suffering caused by a serious illness, regardless of prognosis. The care involves addressing the patient's physical, social, and spiritual needs, as well as facilitating the patient's authority, access to information, and choice. Palliative care includes, but is not limited to: discussing a patient's goals for treatment; discussing the treatment options that are appropriate for the patient; and comprehensive pain and symptom management. In comparison, hospice care may be provided to an individual with a terminal illness whose health care professional certifies they have six months or less to live and have also decided to no longer receive treatment for their illness (e.g., end-of-life care).

Medicare and most Medicaid programs and private insurers cover one form of supportive care—hospice—for patients who are dying. Coverage of, and reimbursement for, palliative care services by Medicaid varies by state. According to the National Academy for State Health Policy, as of January 2021, six states provided funds for palliative care programs and education.

House Bill 2981 requires the Oregon Health Authority to administer a program to provide palliative care services for Medicaid members enrolled in coordinated care organizations.