

SB 772 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

Action Date: 04/07/21

Action: Do pass and requesting referral to Ways and Means.

Vote: 4-1-0-0

Yeas: 4 - Beyer, Knopp, Manning Jr, Patterson

Nays: 1 - Heard

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/31, 4/5, 4/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires individual and group health benefit plans to reimburse services provided by naturopathic physicians within scope of their practice if services are reimbursed when provided by licensed physicians. Requires plans to reimburse naturopathic physicians in independent practice in the same amount and use the same payment methodology as the reimbursement paid to licensed physicians. Prohibits insurers from reducing the reimbursement paid to physicians in order to comply with naturopathic reimbursement parity requirements. Defines "independent practice," "in-network provider," and "out-of-network provider." Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current reimbursement rates for naturopathic physicians by Oregon insurers
- Nurse practitioner and physician assistant payment parity requirements in Oregon
- Parity for practice requirements (e.g., liability insurance)
- Reimbursement of naturopathic physicians by Medicare and Medicaid
- Impact of payment mandates on cost of insurance

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians, naturopathic doctors diagnose, prevent, and treat acute and chronic illness to restore and establish optimal health by supporting the person's inherent self-healing process. Naturopathic doctors work to identify the underlying causes of illness and develop personalized treatment plans to address them. Naturopathic medical education curricula includes the same biomedical and diagnostic sciences as medical doctors (MDs) and osteopathic doctors (DOs) while also receiving education in additional areas such as clinical nutrition, acupuncture, homeopathic medicine, botanical medicine, physical medicine, and counseling. According to Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Health Care Workforce Reporting Program, in 2020, there were approximately 1,000 licensed naturopathic physicians in Oregon. In 2013, the Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 2902 which requires health insurers to reimburse physician assistants and nurse practitioners at the same rate as physicians when providing the same services.

Senate Bill 772 requires individual and group health benefit plans to reimburse naturopathic physicians at the same rate as physicians if the services provided by the naturopathic physician are covered by the plan when provided by a physician.