

Weekly Legislative Update: Health

Issue Team Chair: Kim Abbey

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January 16, 2020

Priority Bills Needing Action This Week

Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, **so please leave the “Organization” box blank**. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

[HB 1141](#) **Increasing access to the death with dignity act.** Sponsor: Rep. Skyler Rude
Makes changes to the 2009 Death with Dignity Act, mainly changes ‘physician’ to ‘qualified medical provider.’ Hospice care is increasingly provided by advanced registered nurse practitioners and physician assistants, especially in rural areas. Eliminates the 15-day waiting period and reduces it to 72 hours. A contract employer may not prevent a health care provider from participating in Death with Dignity Act of 2009 so long as they act independently and at a location that is not on the hospital facility premises.

⚠ **Write to your Senator:** [Carolyn will put the link in here for this when I create the alert]

[HB 1616](#) **Concerning the charity care act.** Sponsor: Tarra Simmons
Establishes minimum charity care requirements for hospitals such that patients below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) receive coverage for the full amount of their charges, patients from 301 percent up to 350 percent of the FPL receive coverage for 75 percent of their charges, and patients from 351 percent up to 400 percent of the FPL receive coverage for 50 percent of their charges. It also expands the application of hospital charity care requirements to include clinics affiliated with a hospital. Had a Public hearing in the House Committee on Health Care & Wellness on Jan 13, 2022 at 10:00 AM.

⚠ Scheduled for an executive session in the House Committee on Health Care & Wellness on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 8:00 AM.

[HB 1622](#) **Increasing the availability of sexual assault nurse examiners.** Sponsor: Rep. Gina Mosbrucker.

The Washington State University college of nursing shall establish a program to increase the availability of qualified sexual assault nurse examiners in eastern Washington. The program will develop and train lead sexual assault nurse examiners. Had a public Hearing on January 10, 2022 and executive session on January 13, 2022. Referred to House Rules committee.

⚠️ This bill will be heard in the House Rules committee on Mon, Jan. 10 at 1:30 PM and Thursday Jan 13 at 10:00 AM. Please sign in as Pro at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=House&mId=29436&aId=143679&caId=1849%201&tId=3>

[HB 1646](#) Continuing the work of the dementia action collaborative. Sponsor: Rep. Jessica Bateman.

In January 2016, Washington state released a State Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias. The State Plan identifies goals, strategies, and recommendations as a blueprint for action. This bill reestablishes the formal dementia action collaborative to update the state plan and make recommendations.

⚠️ This is scheduled for public hearing in the executive committee on Wednesday, January 19, 2022

[SB 5518](#) Concerning the occupational therapy licensure compact. Sponsor: Sen. Ron Muzzall. The purpose of this compact is to facilitate interstate practice of occupational therapy with the goal of improving public access to occupational therapy services, primarily in rural areas. The compact member states will create and establish a joint public agency known as the occupational therapy compact commission. This bill, if passed, will allow OTs and COTAs (Certified Assistants) to work in other states under their home state license.

⚠️ Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care on Monday, January 17, 2022 at 1:30 PM. **Please sign in as Pro** at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/CSI/Senate> fill in committee name and date and select SB 5518.

[SB 5532](#) Establishing a prescription drug affordability board. Sponsor: Sen. Karen Keiser. The prescription Drug Affordability board is established, to include five members who have expertise in health care economics or clinical medicine appointed by the governor. Board members shall serve for a term of five years. The board must coordinate and collaborate with the Health Care Authority, other boards, work groups, and commissions related to prescription drug costs and emerging therapies including the Health Care Cost Transparency board and the Universal Health Care commission. The board may choose to conduct an affordability review of any prescription drug with excessive price rises in a 12-month period. The board must establish a methodology for setting upper payment limits for prescription drugs.

⚠️ Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 8:00 AM. **Please sign in as Pro** at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/CSI/Senate> Fill in committee name and date and select SB 5532.

[SB 5546](#) Concerning insulin affordability. Sponsor: Sen. Karen Keiser
The total cost of insulin work group is established. The work group membership must consist of the insurance commissioner or designee and twenty members appointed by the governor, to

include representatives of pharmacists, health insurance carriers, patients, pharmacy benefit managers, and others. The work group must review and design strategies to reduce the cost of and total expenditures on insulin in this state. By December 1, 2022, the work group must submit a preliminary report detailing strategies to reduce the cost of and total expenditures on insulin.

⚠ Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care on January 19, 2022 at 8:00 AM. **Please sign in as Pro** at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/CSI/Senate> Fill in committee name and date and select SB 5546.

SB 5589 Concerning statewide spending on primary care. Sponsor: Sen. June Robinson. The board of health shall submit a preliminary report to the governor and relevant committees of the legislature addressing primary care expenditures in Washington. The report must include the annual progress needed for primary care expenditures to reach 12 percent of total health care expenditures in a reasonable amount of time, and methods to incentivize the achievement of desired levels of primary care expenditures.

⚠ Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care on Friday, January 21, 2022 at 8:00 AM **Please sign in as Pro** at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/CSI/Senate> Fill in committee name and date and select SB 5589.

SB 5688 Concerning material changes to the operations and governance structure of participants in the health care marketplace. Sponsor: Sen. Emily Randall

The legislature is committed to ensuring that Washingtonians have access to the full range of reproductive, end-of-life, and gender affirming health care services. Health entity mergers, acquisitions, and contracting affiliations must improve rather than harm access to affordable quality health care. The attorney general's authority to determine the effect of a material change transaction (acquisition or merger) on access to care, The parties to the transaction shall submit written notice to the attorney general of such material change transaction 4 months prior to the merger. The impact statement must have an assessment of the effect of the acquisition on emergency services, reproductive health care services, end-of-life health care services, and gender affirming health care services and charity care.

⚠ Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on Law & Justice on Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 10:30 AM. **Please sign in as Pro** at:
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/CSI/Senate> Fill in committee name and date and select SB 5688.

HB 1860 Preventing homelessness among persons discharging from inpatient behavioral health settings. Sponsor: Rep. Lauren Davis

By October 1, 2022, the Health Care Authority shall require that any contract with a managed care organization include a requirement to provide housing-related care coordination services to enrollees who are being discharged from inpatient behavioral health settings.

⚠️ Scheduled for public hearing in the House Committee on Health Care & Wellness at on Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 10:00 AM. **Please sign in as Pro** at: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/house> Fill in committee name and date and select HB 1860.

[HB 1866](#) Assisting persons receiving community support services through medical assistance programs to receive supportive housing. Sponsor: Rep. Frank Chopp

It is the intent of the legislature to treat chronic homelessness as a medical condition and that the Apple Health address the needs of chronically homeless populations by pairing a health care problem with a health care solution.

⚠️ Scheduled for public hearing in the House Committee on Health Care & Wellness on Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 10:00 AM. **Please sign in as Pro** at: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/house> Fill in committee name and date and select HB 1866.

Bills We Support

[HB 1854](#) Requiring coverage for hearing instruments. Sponsor: Rep. Emily Wicks. A health carrier offering a health plan issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2023, must include coverage for hearing instruments. The maximum benefit amount required by this section is \$2,500 per ear with hearing loss every 36 months

[SB 5518](#) Concerning the occupational therapy licensure compact. Sponsor: Sen. Ron Muzzall. The purpose of this compact is to facilitate interstate practice of occupational therapy with the goal of improving public access to occupational therapy services, primarily in rural areas. The compact member states will create and establish a joint public agency known as the occupational therapy compact commission. This bill, if passed, will allow OTs and COTAs (Certified Assistants) to work in other states under their home state license.

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HB 1885 Establishing the profession of dental therapist. Sponsor: Rep. Eileen Cody
It is the legislature's intent that dental therapists will meet the needs of local communities as they work under the direction of a licensed Washington dentist. The legislature intends for dental therapists to be incorporated into the dental care workforce and used to effectively treat more patients.

[HB 1860](#) **Preventing homelessness among persons discharging from inpatient behavioral health settings.** Sponsor: Rep. Lauren Davis
By October 1, 2022, the Health Care Authority shall require that any contract with a managed care organization include a requirement to provide housing-related care coordination services to enrollees who are being discharged from inpatient behavioral health settings.

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How You Can Be Involved

- During the legislative session we will send Action Alerts in the [Legislative Newsletter](#). Please respond to these, which will direct you to an application to facilitate communicating with your legislators on an important vote in committees or on the chamber floor.
- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have education teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Kim Abbey, Healthcare Issue Chair, kabbey@lwvwa.org