



Legislative Session Update

March 22, 2019

Legislative Day 35

Legislation Awaiting the Governor's Signature Into Law

Hospice Orders

[**HB 374**](#), by Rep. John LaHood, authorizes certified medication aides to administer medications to residents under hospice care pursuant to a physician's written orders. The legislation passed the Senate and is awaiting a signature by the Governor.

PDMP Revision

[**SB 121**](#), by Sen. Larry Walker, requires the length of time data is kept on the PDMP. The language allowing law enforcement to search without cause has been removed. The bill was assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil committee and reported favorably. The legislation passed the House and is awaiting a signature by the Governor.

Legislation On The Move

Harm Reduction

[**HB 217**](#) by Rep. Sharon Cooper, creates a syringe services program relating to hypodermic syringes or needles. The bill passed the Senate Health Committee earlier this week. We expect the bill on the Senate floor for a vote next week.

Pre-exposure (PrEP) to HIV Pilot Program

HB 290 by Rep. Sharon Cooper, establishes a three-year pilot program to provide pre-exposure prophylaxis drug assistance or services to persons at risk of being infected with HIV. The bill passed the Senate Health Committee earlier this week.

Pharmacy Benefit Manager Reform

HB 323, by Rep. David Knight, would provide transparency of PBMs to report annually to the Commissioner the aggregate amount of all rebates that the pharmacy benefits manager received from pharmaceutical manufacturers. It also covers the reporting of the aggregate amount of rebates the pharmacy benefits manager received from pharmaceutical manufacturers that it did not pass through to insurers or payers. The bill was reported favorably by the Senate Health Committee where it will move back to the House for an agree/disagree.

Dangerous Drug Update

HB 483, by Rep. Ron Stephens, is the annual update to Schedules I, IV, and V controlled substances. The bill passed the Senate Health Committee earlier this week. We expect the bill on the Senate floor for a vote next week.

Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission

HB 514, by Rep. Kevin Tanner, creates the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission. The legislation creates a commission comprised of 23 experts to develop a statewide plan for mental and behavioral health. The current version includes one Community Service Board as a non-voting member.

Out of Network Billing

SB 56 by Sen. Chuck Hufstetler, was heard in House Insurance Sub-Committee where it had hearing earlier this week. Further changes to the bill are expected to be made in the coming week by House Insurance Chair Richard Smith. Smith has already made changes to the fee schedule.

As a reminder, the bill:

- Removes the patient from the billing dispute that occurs between physicians, providers, health insurers and hospitals
- Applies to emergency and elective cases
- Provides a minimum benefit standard paid to physicians and providers for the health insurers that lack networks

Medicaid Waivers

SB 106 by Sen. Blake Tillery, passed the House Committee on Access to Quality Health Care, it now goes to the House Rules Committee. As a reminder, this is Gov. Brian Kemp's health care legislation surrounding waivers, also known as the 'Patients First Act.' If signed into law, the legislation would authorize the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) to submit a Section 1115 waiver to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand the number of Georgians who are insured by Georgia's Medicaid program. Furthermore, the legislation would allow the Administration to submit a Section 1332 waiver to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to get permission to find innovative ways to provide residents with access to affordable quality health care. A waiver granted from the U.S. HHS Department would allow Georgia to use the Medicaid

expansion funds to buy private insurance in the state health insurance exchange for eligible Georgia citizens at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level.

Georgia Seeks New Enrollment in Medical Plans



State seeks new enrollment for patients caught in contract rift

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Federal health officials are reviewing a Georgia request for a new enrollment period for insurance exchange members who use WellStar Health System doctors and hospitals.

Georgia Insurance Commissioner Jim Beck, in his request to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, cited what he called “misleading, inaccurate and unusual presentations” by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield for its Pathways exchange plan.

[Read More Here...](#)

Legislative Calendar

Legislators will be in session for the final full week of the session Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

As a reminder, Sine Die (Legislative Day 40) is set for Tuesday, April 2.

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