

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 221—COMMITTEE
ON COMMERCE AND LABOR

MARCH 1, 2011

Referred to Committee on Commerce and Labor

SUMMARY—Establishes provisions governing certain acts of pharmacists. (BDR 54-1015)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: Increases or Newly Provides for Term of Imprisonment in County or City Jail or Detention Facility.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to the practice of pharmacy; establishing provisions governing the dispensing of a therapeutic alternative drug; providing a penalty; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

1 Existing law provides for the substitution by a pharmacist of a generic drug for
2 a prescribed drug if the generic drug is biologically equivalent to and has the same
3 active ingredients as the prescribed drug. (NRS 639.2583) **Section 1** of this bill
4 authorizes a pharmacist to dispense a therapeutic alternative drug in place of a
5 prescribed drug under certain circumstances if the pharmacist has obtained the
6 consent of the prescribing practitioner. The substitution of a generic drug differs
7 from a therapeutic interchange authorized by **section 1** in that the therapeutic
8 alternative drug that is being dispensed is not pharmaceutically equivalent to the
9 prescribed drug. **Sections 2-10** of this bill amend existing laws that reference the
10 substitution of generic drugs to also reference therapeutic interchanges.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 **Section 1.** Chapter 639 of NRS is hereby amended by adding
2 thereto a new section to read as follows:
3 *1. A pharmacist who fills or refills a prescription shall not*
4 *dispense a therapeutic alternative drug in place of a drug that is*
5 *prescribed by a practitioner unless the pharmacist has obtained*



1 *consent for such therapeutic interchange from the prescribing*
2 *practitioner. The pharmacist may obtain consent through any*
3 *oral, written or electronic means deemed appropriate by the*
4 *pharmacist.*

5 2. *As used in this section:*

6 (a) *“Food and Drug Administration” means the United States*
7 *Food and Drug Administration of the United States Department of*
8 *Health and Human Services.*

9 (b) *“Therapeutic alternative drug” means a drug that is:*

10 (1) *Approved by the Food and Drug Administration*
11 *pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C.*
12 *§§ 301 et seq.;*

13 (2) *In the same therapeutic class and approved for the same*
14 *indication as another drug; and*

15 (3) *Not a therapeutically equivalent drug.*

16 (c) *“Therapeutic interchange” means the dispensing of a*
17 *therapeutic alternative drug.*

18 (d) *“Therapeutically equivalent drug” means a drug that is:*

19 (1) *Approved by the Food and Drug Administration*
20 *pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C.*
21 *§§ 301 et seq.;*

22 (2) *Pharmaceutically equivalent, based on the scientific*
23 *and medical evaluations of the Food and Drug Administration, to*
24 *a brand name drug, including, without limitation, having the same*
25 *active ingredient, dosage form, strength and route of*
26 *administration, and is bioequivalent to the brand name drug; and*

27 (3) *Assigned a therapeutic equivalence code starting with*
28 *the letter “A” in accordance with the most recently published*
29 *edition of the “Approved Drug Products with Therapeutic*
30 *Equivalence Evaluations” published by the Food and Drug*
31 *Administration and any cumulative supplements thereto.*

32 **Sec. 2.** NRS 639.259 is hereby amended to read as follows:

33 639.259 No employer of a pharmacist may require the
34 pharmacist to dispense any specific generic drug in substitution for
35 another drug if the:

36 1. Substitution is not permitted by the prescription as signed by
37 a practitioner;

38 2. Substitution would be against the professional judgment of
39 the pharmacist; or

40 3. Substitution would violate any provision of NRS 639.2583
41 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~§~~, *and section 1 of this act.*

42 **Sec. 3.** NRS 689A.04045 is hereby amended to read as
43 follows:

44 689A.04045 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section,
45 a policy of health insurance which provides coverage for



1 prescription drugs must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if
2 the drug:

3 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the insurer
4 for a medical condition of an insured and the insured's provider of
5 health care determines, after conducting a reasonable investigation,
6 that none of the drugs which are otherwise currently approved for
7 coverage are medically appropriate for the insured; and

8 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
9 for treating the medical condition of the insured.

10 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

11 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
12 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
13 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

14 (b) Prohibit:

15 (1) The insurer from charging a deductible, copayment or
16 coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
17 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
18 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

19 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
20 covered by the policy that is medically appropriate for the insured;
21 or

22 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
23 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~§~~, and *section 1 of*
24 *this act*; or

25 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the policy.

26 3. Any provision of a policy subject to the provisions of this
27 chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or renewed on or after
28 October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this section is void.

29 **Sec. 4.** NRS 689B.0368 is hereby amended to read as follows:

30 689B.0368 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a
31 policy of group health insurance which provides coverage for
32 prescription drugs must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if
33 the drug:

34 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the insurer
35 for a medical condition of an insured and the insured's provider of
36 health care determines, after conducting a reasonable investigation,
37 that none of the drugs which are otherwise currently approved for
38 coverage are medically appropriate for the insured; and

39 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
40 for treating the medical condition of the insured.

41 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

42 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
43 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
44 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

45 (b) Prohibit:



1 (1) The insurer from charging a deductible, copayment or
2 coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
3 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
4 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

5 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
6 covered by the policy that is medically appropriate for the insured;
7 or

8 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
9 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive **[H]**, and *section 1 of*
10 *this act*; or

11 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the policy.

12 3. Any provision of a policy subject to the provisions of this
13 chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or renewed on or after
14 October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this section is void.

15 **Sec. 5.** NRS 689C.168 is hereby amended to read as follows:

16 689C.168 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a
17 health benefit plan which provides coverage for prescription drugs
18 must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if the drug:

19 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the carrier for
20 a medical condition of an insured and the insured's provider of
21 health care determines, after conducting a reasonable investigation,
22 that none of the drugs which are otherwise currently approved for
23 coverage are medically appropriate for the insured; and

24 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
25 for treating the medical condition of the insured.

26 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

27 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
28 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
29 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

30 (b) Prohibit:

31 (1) The carrier from charging a deductible, copayment or
32 coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
33 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
34 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

35 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
36 covered by the plan that is medically appropriate for the insured; or

37 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
38 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive **[H]**, and *section 1 of*
39 *this act*; or

40 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the plan.

41 3. Any provision of a health benefit plan subject to the
42 provisions of this chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or
43 renewed on or after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this
44 section is void.



1 **Sec. 6.** NRS 695A.184 is hereby amended to read as follows:
2 695A.184 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a
3 benefit contract which provides coverage for prescription drugs
4 must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if the drug:

5 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the society
6 for a medical condition of an insured and the insured's provider of
7 health care determines, after conducting a reasonable investigation,
8 that none of the drugs which are otherwise currently approved for
9 coverage are medically appropriate for the insured; and

10 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
11 for treating the medical condition of the insured.

12 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

13 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
14 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
15 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

16 (b) Prohibit:

17 (1) The society from charging a deductible, copayment or
18 coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
19 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
20 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

21 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
22 covered by the benefit contract that is medically appropriate for the
23 insured; or

24 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
25 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~§~~, *and section 1 of*
26 *this act*; or

27 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the benefit
28 contract.

29 3. Any provision of a benefit contract subject to the provisions
30 of this chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or renewed on or
31 after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this section is void.

32 **Sec. 7.** NRS 695B.1905 is hereby amended to read as follows:

33 695B.1905 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a
34 contract for hospital or medical services which provides coverage
35 for prescription drugs must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug
36 if the drug:

37 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the insurer
38 for a medical condition of an insured and the insured's provider of
39 health care determines, after conducting a reasonable investigation,
40 that none of the drugs which are otherwise currently approved for
41 coverage are medically appropriate for the insured; and

42 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
43 for treating the medical condition of the insured.

44 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:



1 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
2 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
3 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

4 (b) Prohibit:

5 (1) The insurer from charging a deductible, copayment or
6 coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
7 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
8 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

9 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
10 covered by the contract that is medically appropriate for the insured;
11 or

12 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
13 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~§~~, *and section 1 of*
14 *this act*; or

15 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the
16 contract.

17 3. Any provision of a contract for hospital or medical services
18 subject to the provisions of this chapter that is delivered, issued for
19 delivery or renewed on or after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict
20 with this section is void.

21 **Sec. 8.** NRS 695C.1734 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22 695C.1734 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section,
23 evidence of coverage which provides coverage for prescription
24 drugs must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if the drug:

25 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the health
26 maintenance organization or insurer for a medical condition of an
27 enrollee and the enrollee's provider of health care determines, after
28 conducting a reasonable investigation, that none of the drugs which
29 are otherwise currently approved for coverage are medically
30 appropriate for the enrollee; and

31 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
32 for treating the medical condition of the enrollee.

33 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

34 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
35 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
36 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

37 (b) Prohibit:

38 (1) The health maintenance organization or insurer from
39 charging a deductible, copayment or coinsurance for the provision
40 of benefits for prescription drugs to the enrollee or from
41 establishing, by contract, limitations on the maximum coverage for
42 prescription drugs;

43 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
44 covered by the evidence of coverage that is medically appropriate
45 for the enrollee; or



1 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
2 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~H~~, and *section 1 of*
3 *this act*; or

4 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the
5 evidence of coverage.

6 3. Any provision of an evidence of coverage subject to the
7 provisions of this chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or
8 renewed on or after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this
9 section is void.

10 **Sec. 9.** NRS 695F.156 is hereby amended to read as follows:

11 695F.156 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section,
12 evidence of coverage which provides coverage for prescription
13 drugs must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if the drug:

14 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the prepaid
15 limited health service organization for a medical condition of an
16 enrollee and the enrollee's provider of health care determines, after
17 conducting a reasonable investigation, that none of the drugs which
18 are otherwise currently approved for coverage are medically
19 appropriate for the enrollee; and

20 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
21 for treating the medical condition of the enrollee.

22 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:

23 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
24 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
25 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;

26 (b) Prohibit:

27 (1) The organization from charging a deductible, copayment
28 or coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
29 the enrollee or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
30 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;

31 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
32 covered by the evidence of coverage that is medically appropriate
33 for the enrollee; or

34 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
35 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~H~~, and *section 1 of*
36 *this act*; or

37 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the
38 evidence of coverage.

39 3. Any provision of an evidence of coverage subject to the
40 provisions of this chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or
41 renewed on or after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this
42 section is void.



1 **Sec. 10.** NRS 695G.166 is hereby amended to read as follows:
2 695G.166 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a
3 health care plan which provides coverage for prescription drugs
4 must not limit or exclude coverage for a drug if the drug:
5 (a) Had previously been approved for coverage by the managed
6 care organization for a medical condition of an insured and the
7 insured's provider of health care determines, after conducting a
8 reasonable investigation, that none of the drugs which are otherwise
9 currently approved for coverage are medically appropriate for the
10 insured; and
11 (b) Is appropriately prescribed and considered safe and effective
12 for treating the medical condition of the insured.
13 2. The provisions of subsection 1 do not:
14 (a) Apply to coverage for any drug that is prescribed for a use
15 that is different from the use for which that drug has been approved
16 for marketing by the Food and Drug Administration;
17 (b) Prohibit:
18 (1) The organization from charging a deductible, copayment
19 or coinsurance for the provision of benefits for prescription drugs to
20 the insured or from establishing, by contract, limitations on the
21 maximum coverage for prescription drugs;
22 (2) A provider of health care from prescribing another drug
23 covered by the plan that is medically appropriate for the insured; or
24 (3) The substitution of another drug pursuant to NRS
25 639.23286 or 639.2583 to 639.2597, inclusive ~~H~~, *and section 1 of*
26 *this act*; or
27 (c) Require any coverage for a drug after the term of the plan.
28 3. Any provision of a health care plan subject to the provisions
29 of this chapter that is delivered, issued for delivery or renewed on or
30 after October 1, 2001, which is in conflict with this section is void.

