
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6233

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senate Health & Long Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Cleveland, Rivers, Kuderer, Fain, and Conway)

READ FIRST TIME 02/02/18.

1 AN ACT Relating to regulating the use of step therapy protocols;
2 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds the following:

5 (1) Health insurance plans are increasingly making use of step
6 therapy protocols under which patients are required to try one or
7 more prescription drugs before coverage is provided for a drug
8 selected by the patient's health care provider;

9 (2) Such step therapy protocols, where they are based on well-
10 developed scientific standards and administered in a flexible manner
11 that takes into account the individual needs of patients, can play an
12 important role in controlling health care costs; and

13 (3) In some cases, requiring a patient to follow a step therapy
14 protocol may have adverse and even dangerous consequences for the
15 patient who may either not realize a benefit from taking a
16 prescription drug or may suffer harm from taking an inappropriate
17 drug.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington state institute for
19 public policy must conduct a literature review of step therapy
20 protocol usage including information concerning negative outcomes or

1 adverse events resulting from step therapy protocol usage. The
2 institute must provide recommendations to the appropriate committees
3 of the senate and house of representatives as to whether creating
4 exceptions based on medical necessity on the use of step therapy
5 would improve health outcomes and reduce adverse events. The
6 institute may analyze any criteria deemed necessary to determine the
7 effectiveness of creating exceptions for step therapy including
8 seeking input from interested parties. The institute will include in
9 its report a summary of similar exceptions that have been codified in
10 other states and the impact they have had on health outcomes. The
11 report with policy recommendations must be submitted by December 1,
12 2018.

13 (2) This section expires June 30, 2019.

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