
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 991

AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Social Services commissioner to design and implement a program to provide Medicaid reimbursement to certified community health workers (CHWs; see BACKGROUND) for services provided to HUSKY Health (i.e., Medicaid and the state children's health insurance program) beneficiaries, including the following:

1. coordination of medical, oral, and behavioral health care services and social supports;
2. connection to, and navigation of, health systems and services;
3. prenatal, birth, lactation, and postpartum supports; and
4. health promotion, coaching, and self-management education.

The bill requires the commissioner to reimburse certified CHW services in a manner and at a rate conducive to workforce growth that does not provide financial incentives for other providers to limit access to them.

Throughout the program's design and implementation, the commissioner and her designees must consult with certified CHWs, Medicaid beneficiaries, and advocates, including those for people with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities, and others. They must consult in a manner that (1) is inclusive of community-based and clinic-based certified CHWs, (2) is representative of Medicaid beneficiary demographics, and (3) helps shape the program's design and

implementation.

The bill also requires the commissioner, by January 1, 2024, and annually after that until the program is fully implemented, to report to the Human Services Committee and the Council on Medical Assistance Program Oversight. The report must provide a program update and evaluate its impact on health outcomes and health equity.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Certified Community Health Worker

By law, a certified CHW is a public health outreach professional with an in-depth understanding of the experience, language, culture, and socioeconomic needs of the community. CHWs provide a range of services, including, but not limited to, outreach; engagement; education; coaching; informal counseling; social support; advocacy; care coordination; research related to social determinants of health; and basic screenings and assessments of any risks associated with social determinants of health.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 7 (03/21/2023)