

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/18/15

Action: Do Pass The A-Eng Bill.

Meeting Dates: 05/18

Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Knopp, Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Shields

Exc: 1 - Steiner Hayward

Prepared By: Zena Rockowitz, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows naturopathic doctor to apply for credentialing by an insurer as a primary care provider and to meet specific insurer requirements.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Accessibility to primary care physicians
- Delivery of primary care and preventive services by naturopathic doctors
- Designation by several major health insurance carriers of naturopathic doctors as specialists
- Differences in payment, referral and service provision for primary care versus specialists

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) attend naturopathic medical college at four-year, post graduate, accredited medical schools. NDs are trained as primary care providers, specializing in prevention and stress management. NDs in Oregon diagnose and treat patients, provide diagnostic labs and medical imaging, prescribe pharmaceuticals used in primary care (with ability to hold licenses for federally scheduled medications), refer to specialists and perform minor surgeries.

Oregon has a shortage of primary care providers (PCPs). The Oregon Health Policy Board's Healthcare Workforce Committee's 5-Year Strategic Plan for PCP recruitment in Oregon recommends the following: "Increase access to primary care provided by NDs by removing coverage and credentialing barriers. In some locations, NDs are an underutilized and immediately available primary care workforce." House Bill 3301-A allows NDs who meet the insurers credentialing and contracting agreement, the option to practice as a primary care provider.