

HB 2015 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Frederick

Senate Committee On Health Care

Action Date: 05/25/17
Action: Do pass the A-Eng bill.
Vote: 3-0-2-0
Yeas: 3 - Beyer, Kruse, Monnes Anderson
Exc: 2 - Knopp, Steiner Hayward
Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA), in coordination with Traditional Health Workers Commission, to establish reimbursement rates for doulas. Establishes that rates are to be reviewed, and revised if necessary, every even-numbered year. Identifies factors to be considered in rate review. Requires coordinated care organizations make information about access to doula services available to public. Requires OHA to study possible changes to Medicaid to facilitate direct payments to doulas. Requires OHA to report, annually, to Oregon Health Policy Board and Oregon Public Health Advisory Board on doulas. Specifies content of report.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Professionalize and institutionalize doulas in Oregon as a workforce
- Improve availability of doulas in Medicaid
- Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for doulas
- Differences between doulas and midwives

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

A doula (professional labor assistant) provides personal non-medical support to women and families during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum experience. The doula's role is to help women have a safe birthing experience and help eliminate health disparities related to maternal and infant health (Oregon Health Authority, 2012). Although research is limited, some studies have shown that continuous support from doulas during childbirth has decreased use of pain medication during labor, decreased incidence of C-sections, decreased the length of labor and decreased negative childbirth experiences.

Doulas are recognized as one of five traditional health worker types in Oregon. In 2015, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) encouraged doulas to become eligible to support mothers enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan (i.e., Medicaid). OHA outlined a three-step process for doulas to become eligible to receive reimbursement for Medicaid services that include becoming certified and registered as a Traditional Health Worker (OAR 410-130-0015).

House Bill 2015-A requires OHA to review and revise rates for doula services provided to Medicaid enrollees every two years and report annually on the status of doulas in Oregon.