
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2391

Brief Description: Concerning pain management training.

Sponsors: Representatives Moeller, Appleton and McCoy.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires certain health professionals to complete a pain management education program.

Hearing Date: 1/12/10

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Generally, pain management is the practice of medically treating people suffering from pain, including the management of long-term pain. Pharmacological interventions for pain often include the use of opioids. Because of the health risks associated with opioid use, there are several state rules and guidelines for prescribing such drugs.

For example, both the Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) and the Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery (BOMS) have adopted guidelines for the treatment of pain with opioids. Additionally, the MQAC and the BOMS have adopted rules that require practitioners treating pain to be knowledgeable about the complex nature of pain, familiar with pain treatment terms used in the pain guidelines, and knowledgeable about acceptable pain treatment modalities. The rules also state that practitioners will not be disciplined based solely on the quantity or frequency of opioids prescribed as long as the care provided is consistent with currently acceptable medical practices.

Other guidelines for the treatment of pain were developed by the Agency Medical Director's Group, which was a consortium of agencies that purchase or regulate health care, including the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor and

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Industries (L&I), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the Health Care Authority in consultation with a panel of pain experts. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist primary care providers when prescribing opioids in a safe and effective manner and to assist primary care providers in treating patients whose morphine equivalent dose already exceeds 120 mg per day.

The DOH also hosts a work group on reducing opioid abuse and unintentional poisonings. The group consists of representatives from the DOH, the DSHS, the L&I, the MQAC, the Board of Pharmacy, the University of Washington, the Office of the Attorney General, and other public and private entities.

Summary of Bill:

The Secretary of Health must (Secretary), by November 15, 2010, develop, by rule, criteria for approving pain management education programs. Annually, beginning January 1, 2011, the Secretary must use the criteria to publish a list of approved pain management education programs.

A licensed health professional authorized to prescribe a Schedule II controlled substance must complete one pain management education program approved by the Secretary as part of his or her continuing education requirements. The professional must complete the program either (1) within 24 months of the effective date of the act if he or she was licensed prior to the effective date of the act or (2) prior to renewal if the license holder was licensed on or after the effective date of the act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested 1/12/10.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.