

HB 965 -- MO HEALTHNET TELEHEALTH SERVICES

SPONSOR: Allen

This bill changes the laws regarding telehealth services in the MO HealthNet program. The bill requires the Department of Social Services to develop and implement a system to reimburse providers of services under the MO HealthNet program for services performed using telemedicine medical services or telehealth services. The department must establish rules as specified in the bill when developing the system. The department is required to encourage health care providers and health care facilities to participate as telemedicine medical service providers or telehealth service providers in the health care delivery system and the department must not require that a service be provided to a patient through telemedicine medical services or telehealth services if the service can reasonably be provided by a physician through a face-to-face consultation with the patient in the community in which the patient resides or works. The department's rules must refer to the site where the patient is physically located as the patient site and refer to the site where the physician or health care professional providing the telemedicine medical service or telehealth service is physically located as the distant site. The bill prohibits the department from reimbursing a health care facility for telemedicine medical services or telehealth services provided to a MO HealthNet recipient unless the facility complies with the minimum standards adopted under these provisions.

By December 1 of each even-numbered year, the department is required to report to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem of the Senate on the effects of telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, and home telemonitoring services on the MO HealthNet program in the state. The report must include the number of physicians, health care professionals, and licensed health care facilities using telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, or home telemonitoring services; the geographic and demographic disposition of the physicians and health care professionals; the number of patients receiving telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, and home telemonitoring services; the types of services being provided; and the cost of utilization of telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, and home telemonitoring services to the program.

The bill requires the department to establish and adopt minimum standards for an operating system used in the provision of telemedicine medical services, telehealth services, or home telemonitoring services by a health care facility participating in the MO HealthNet program including standards for electronic

transmission, software, and hardware.

If the department determines that establishing a statewide program that permits reimbursement under the MO HealthNet program for home telemonitoring services would be cost effective and feasible, the department must establish the program. The program must:

- (1) Provide that home telemonitoring services are available only to individuals who meet conditions specified in the bill;
- (2) Ensure that clinical information gathered by a home health agency or hospital while providing home telemonitoring services is shared with the patient's physician; and
- (3) Ensure that the program does not duplicate any disease management program services provided by MO HealthNet.

If, after implementation, the department determines that the program established under the provisions of the bill is not cost effective, the department may discontinue the program and stop providing reimbursement under the MO HealthNet program for home telemonitoring services. The department must determine whether the provision of home telemonitoring services to individuals who are eligible to receive benefits under both the MO HealthNet and Medicare programs achieves cost savings for the Medicare program.

The provisions of the bill relating to the establishment of the statewide program if it is cost effective must expire September 1, 2019, unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.

By December 31, 2016, the department must submit a report to the Governor, President Pro Tem of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives regarding the establishment and implementation of the program under these provisions. The report must include information specified in the bill. If, before implementing any of these provisions, it is determined that a waiver or authorization from a federal agency is necessary for implementation, the department must request the waiver or authorization and may delay implementation until the waiver or authorization is granted.