

Idaho Academy of Family Physicians 2017 Legislative Update - Week 5

The Week Ending February 10, 2017

Ken Burgess, Veritas Advisors, LLP – IAFP Legislative Advisor

Your Health Idaho health insurance exchange enrollment

Pat Kelly, the Director of Your Health Idaho (YHI) insurance exchange delivered his annual report on the program to legislators this week. The Idaho exchange hit a new record enrollment this year at 106,000 enrollees. The enrollment period ended January 31. Of those numbers, one-third of them were first time enrollees, and eighty seven percent of them were eligible for federal subsidies to help them pay their premiums.

As you know, there is still quite a bit of uncertainty about what may happen to the YHI in the event Congress changes or eliminates the Affordable Care Act. It is important to note that Idaho's exchange is very unique in that it is not tied to or reliant upon the federal health insurance exchange program and is its own, stand-alone state-run exchange. In *theory*, Idaho's exchange could continue to exist – structurally -- even if the Affordable Care Act were repealed. Politically however, such a prospect would be very murky.

Health and Welfare Director Dick Armstrong 2018 Budget overview

Director Armstrong gave a little more detail to his 2018 budget request compared to what was revealed in the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee.

He noted that in 2016 the Department has seen a significant increase in Medicaid participants.

The priorities for DHW in this budget request for Child Welfare, Child Support System, Behavioral Health, a Psychiatric Facility Plan, and a 1% pay increase for DHW employees. They want to improve support for Foster Families, retaining foster families, and increase the number of social workers for child welfare. They are asking for \$69 million to put into place the mechanisms for making this happen.

The Department also signed a settlement agreement to implement a more meaningful system of care for children with serious emotional disturbances. Implementation will take several years. They also intend to do more to assist with mental health matters related to high-risk probationers and parolees to reduce the recidivism rate of that population.

Legislation of interest:

H004 to add the **prescribing of tobacco cessation products** to the practice of pharmacy has now unanimously passed both houses of the legislature and is awaiting action by Governor Otter.

H005 to enhance the use of the **Prescription Monitoring Program** for controlled substances and allow greater access to the database by pharmacists. This bill also passed both houses unanimously and is awaiting action by the Governor.

H006 Controlled Substances -- This bill aligns Idaho law with recent DEA changes, to provide conformance DEA schedules. Two additional products have been added to the schedule: eluxadoline and brivaracetam. Passed both houses and has been sent to the Governor.

H0039 "Value-based" payments. Directs the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to pursue Value-based payment system for provider-based managed care in the Medicaid program. This bill was introduced on January 24 and has had no action in House Health and Welfare Committee.

H0082 Sales Tax Exemptions for Free Medical Clinics by Rep. Kauffman. This legislation would provide sales and use tax exemption for sales to or purchased by the ten designated free medical clinics in the state. This bill passed the House with only 3 NO votes and is awaiting action in the Senate Local Government and Taxation Committee.

H0091 Immunization Registry. This legislation introduced in House Health and Welfare Committee on Wednesday simply requires that all providers who immunize patients in Idaho shall enter all immunizations, with the exception of adult influenza vaccines, into the Idaho Immunization Reminder Information System (IRIS). This bill is from the Idaho Medical Association, and is awaiting a full hearing in the committee with no firm timeline for said hearing.

New Legislation of Interest:

H 115 "Interstate Medical Licensure Compact" This legislation adds language authorizing the Board of Medicine to obtain criminal background check information when qualifying physicians for the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. The compact provides expedited licensure for physicians. This is especially useful in rural areas, given that they need replacements quickly because of their low population. Background checks and fingerprinting is currently not in the statute. This bill was introduced in House Health and Welfare Committee and is awaiting a full hearing in that committee.

S1058 "Telehealth access, cost coverage" This legislation will bolster the success of Idaho's Telehealth Access Act. It would allow for costs of telehealth services to be covered in the same manner and to the same extent as if the services were delivered in person. This bill is the idea of Dr. Scott Dunn of Sandpoint and Senator Shawn Keough is sponsoring it. It now awaits a full hearing in the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee.

S1060 "Health care/cytomegalovirus" The purpose of the bill is to provide funding for the Department of Health and Welfare to develop and disseminate educational material ensure the women of Idaho and their doctors have access to the most accurate and up-to-date information available regarding cytomegalovirus (CMV) prevention, infection, and treatment. Introduced in Senate Health and Welfare Committee on February 9.

If you have questions regarding a piece of legislation or you would like the IAFP to monitor specific legislation that is not currently being monitored, please contact Neva Santos, IAFP Executive Director at Idahoafp@aol.com or [\(208\) 323-1156](tel:2083231156).

Don't miss the IAFP "Excellence in Primary Care Seminar" on March 17 and 18, 2017 at Schweitzer Mountain Resort in Sandpoint, Idaho. Experience the unparalleled snow on Schweitzer Mountain and earn up to 7 CME Credits. The amazing ski experience of Schweitzer Mountain is just a few minutes up the hill from beautiful Lake Pend Oreille and the picturesque town of Sandpoint. Log on to the IAFP Web page: <http://idahofamilyphysicians.org/excellence-in-primary-care-seminar/> for more information about activities and events.