



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 422

February Session, 2014

Substitute Senate Bill No. 257

Senate, April 8, 2014

The Committee on Public Health reported through SEN. GERRATANA of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING HEPATITIS C TESTING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) (a) For purposes of this
2 section:

3 (1) "Hepatitis C screening test" means a laboratory test that detects
4 the presence of hepatitis C virus antibodies in the blood;

5 (2) "Hepatitis C diagnostic test" means a laboratory test that detects
6 the presence of hepatitis C virus in the blood and provides
7 confirmation of whether the person whose blood is being tested has a
8 hepatitis C virus infection;

9 (3) "Primary care provider" means a physician, advanced practice
10 registered nurse or physician assistant who provides primary care
11 services and is licensed by the Department of Public Health pursuant
12 to Title 20 of the general statutes; and

13 (4) "Primary care" means the medical fields of family medicine,
 14 general pediatrics, primary care, internal medicine, primary care
 15 obstetrics or primary care gynecology, without regard to board
 16 certification.

17 (b) On and after October 1, 2014, a primary care provider shall offer
 18 to provide to, or order for, each patient who was born between 1945 to
 19 1965, inclusive, a hepatitis C screening test or hepatitis C diagnostic
 20 test at the time the primary care provider provides services to such
 21 patient, except a primary care provider is not required to offer to
 22 provide to, or order for, such patient a hepatitis C screening test or
 23 hepatitis C diagnostic test when the primary care provider reasonably
 24 believes: (1) Such patient is being treated for a life-threatening
 25 emergency; (2) such patient has previously been offered or has
 26 received a hepatitis C screening test; or (3) such patient lacks the
 27 capacity to consent to a hepatitis C screening test.

28 (c) A primary care provider who provides or orders a hepatitis C
 29 screening test pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, and receives
 30 notice that said test is reactive shall offer the patient having a reactive
 31 test continuing health care relating to the reactive test or refer such
 32 patient to another health care provider for such continuing health care.
 33 Such continuing health care shall include a hepatitis C diagnostic test.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2014	New section

PH Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

This bill, which creates requirements for primary care providers, does not result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities. It does not alter the Department of Public Health's licensure and regulation of these providers.

The Out Years**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 257*****AN ACT CONCERNING HEPATITIS C TESTING.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill generally requires licensed primary care physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, and physician assistants (“primary care providers”) to offer to provide or order a hepatitis C screening or diagnostic test for patients born between 1945 and 1965, when providing services to these patients.

The requirement does not apply when the provider reasonably believes that the patient (1) is being treated for a life-threatening emergency, (2) has previously been offered or received a hepatitis C screening test, or (3) lacks the capacity to consent.

Under the bill, a “hepatitis C screening test” is a laboratory test that detects the presence of hepatitis C virus antibodies in the blood. If a primary care provider provides or orders such a test and receives notice that it is reactive, the provider must offer continuing care relating to the test or refer the patient to another health care provider for such care. The continuing care must include a hepatitis C diagnostic test (a laboratory test that detects the presence of hepatitis C virus in the blood and confirms whether the patient has a hepatitis C virus infection).

The bill defines “primary care” as family medicine, general pediatrics, primary care, internal medicine, primary care obstetrics, or primary care gynecology, without regard to board certification.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014

BACKGROUND

Hepatitis C

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus that infects the liver and can cause liver cirrhosis, cancer, liver failure, or death. The disease can be acute or chronic. Acute hepatitis C is less severe but often develops into chronic hepatitis C.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 0 (03/21/2014)