
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 7301 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING REMOTE ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

SUMMARY

This bill requires hospitals to provide the Department of Public Health (DPH) access, including remote access if technically feasible, to complete electronic medical records on reportable diseases and emergency illnesses and health conditions, in a manner the commissioner approves (see BACKGROUND).

It also requires hospitals to grant DPH access, including remote access if technically feasible, to complete patient medical records related to the Connecticut Tumor Registry. Hospitals must do this only if the department requests it and deems it necessary to perform case findings or other quality improvement audits (see BACKGROUND). Existing law already grants the department access to health care provider records for this purpose.

By law, these records generally (1) are confidential and not subject to disclosure, (2) are not admissible as evidence in any court or agency proceeding, and (3) must be used solely for medical or scientific research or disease control and prevention purposes.

The bill also makes technical changes.

*House Amendment "A" specifies that hospitals must provide DPH (1) access to complete medical records and (2) remote access to the medical records only if it is technically feasible.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

DPH Reportable Disease List

By law, DPH maintains an annual list of reportable diseases and emergency illnesses and conditions and reportable lab findings. Health care providers and clinical laboratories must report cases of the listed conditions within certain timeframes to the department and the local health director where the case occurs.

Connecticut Tumor Registry

By law, the Connecticut Tumor Registry includes reports of all tumors and conditions that are diagnosed or treated in the state for which DPH requires reports. Hospitals, various health care providers, and clinical laboratories must provide such reports to DPH for inclusion in the registry.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 20 Nay 1 (03/22/2019)