OLR Bill Analysis
sSB 821

AN ACT CONCERNING EQUITABLE MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER PRACTITIONERS.

SUMMARY

By law, the Department of Social Services (DSS) uses a prospective payment methodology to determine Medicaid reimbursement rates for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). This bill requires DSS, to the extent permissible under federal law, to allow payment for electronic consulting (e-consults) provided by qualified primary care or treatment practitioners in this payment methodology.

Under current law, DSS does not include e-consults in its daily reimbursement rate for FQHCs (i.e., encounter rate, see BACKGROUND).

The bill also repeals an obsolete reporting requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Electronic Consulting

Primary care providers may use e-consults, a form of telehealth, to consult with specialists on a patient’s medical condition. Generally, primary care providers can administer the recommendations of the specialist without having to refer the patient for a separate visit.

FQHC Reimbursement Rates

FQHCs bill Medicaid per encounter and are paid according to an “encounter rate” DSS establishes using its prospective payment methodology. The encounter rate is an all-inclusive payment for all medical services provided to a Medicaid recipient on the same day. (There are separate encounter rates for dental and behavioral health services).
Under federal law, DSS must adjust FQHC encounter rates to account for any increase or decrease in the scope of services (e.g., change in the type or volume of services) delivered by the FQHC in that fiscal year (42 USC 1396a(bb)).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 18 Nay 0 (03/07/2019)