

MINUTES
Senate Health Services Subcommittee of Public Health Committee
House Health Services Subcommittee of Public Health
Wednesday, September 9, 2020
10:00 A.M.

Subcommittee Members Present: Senators Jimmy Hickey, Jr., Chair; Bill Sample Representatives Michelle Gray, Vice-Chair; Justin Boyd, Lee Johnson, and Mark Perry

Other Legislators Present: Senators Missy Irvin Representatives Bruce Coleman, Jim Dotson, and Marcus Richmond

Call to Order and Comments by the Chair: Senator Hickey called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Adopt Meeting Minutes from August 12, 2020 [Exhibit C] Without objection, the minutes were approved.

ISP2019-001–“Require a Physician to Utilize Treatment Alternatives Before Prescribing an Opioid” Representative Jim Dotson discussed how the Interim Study Proposal (ISP) would study how best to address the opioid crisis happening throughout the state. Physicians would be encouraged to utilize treatment alternatives before prescribing an opioid. It wouldn't, however, completely disallow physicians from prescribing opioids. Patients would now be allowed to request opioids not be prescribed to them within their medical file. It was suggested that the ISP be applied specifically to a broad range of medical practices to determine how it affects each area. More clarification was requested throughout the ISP overall.

ISP2019-006–“Limit Access to a Chiropractic Physician by a Medicaid Recipient” Representative Jim Dotson discussed the amount of chiropractic access provided through Medicaid. Patients are allowed 12 visits through Medicaid without a referral. The ISP would match the number of visits allowed through Medicaid to Arkansas Works Insurance which is 30 visits. It was requested that the study expand to include the number of visits allowed to the primary care physicians as well.

ISP2019-160–“Create the Arkansas Legislative Study on Mental and Behavioral Health” Representative DeAnn Vaught discussed the ever-growing mental and behavioral health problems within the state of Arkansas that will be studied through the ISP proposed. This would include schools along with the capacity of facilities that service those affected by poor behavioral and mental health. There is a shortage of beds at this time in Arkansas. The ISP will also study how to better assist in lowering the suicide rates within the state. Discussion lead the subcommittee to believe the ISP may better be suited for the Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committee moving forward.

ISP2019-166–“Provide for Emergency Medical Care for Injured Police Dogs; and to Provide Immunity” Representative Jimmy Gazaway was not in attendance to present ISP2019-166.

ISP2019-167–“Create the Medical Conscience Protection Act” Representative Brandt Smith was not in attendance to present ISP2019-167.

ISP2019-168–“Study the Role of an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse as a Primary Care Provider with the Arkansas Medicaid Program” Representative Jim Dotson discussed the expansion of advanced practice nurses to use the Arkansas Medicaid Program.

ISP2019-169–“Study the Role of Pharmacy Technicians and Methods to Reduce Barriers that may Prevent Pharmacy Technicians from Being Able to Maximally Assist Pharmacists in the Practice of Pharmacy” Representative Justin Boyd discussed the requirements to become a pharmacy technician. Requirements include a high school diploma or equivalent along with the ability to pass a state background

check. The State Board of Pharmacy would then grant a license with a fee attached. No formal education is required. The ISP would study the role of technicians and evaluate if there are additional tasks technicians could be doing that they are not already doing. This would not include counseling patients on medications, determining which patients received immunizations, or other more clinical decisions that need to be made.

Without further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 AM.

DRAFT