

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 779

(Senator Lawlah, *et al.*)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

Health Insurance - Human Papillomavirus Screening Test - Coverage

This bill requires a health insurer, nonprofit health service plan, or HMO (carrier) to provide coverage for a human papillomavirus (HPV) screening at the testing intervals outlined in the recommendations for cervical cytology screening developed by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The bill applies to all policies, contracts, and health benefit plans issued in the State on or after October 1, 2005. Any policy or plan in effect before October 1, 2005 must comply with the provisions no later than October 1, 2006.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: No impact on the State Employee and Retiree Health and Welfare Benefit Plan (State plan), which already covers this benefit. Minimal special fund revenue increase for the Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) from the \$125 rate and form filing fee in FY 2006. Minimal general fund revenue increase from the State's 2% insurance premium tax on for-profit carriers, beginning in FY 2006, if premiums increase.

Local Effect: To the extent carriers increase premiums as a result of the bill's requirements, expenditures for local government employee health benefits could increase. Any increase is expected to be negligible. No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Currently, carriers must cover 40 mandated health benefits. Mandated benefits apply to both the fully-insured large employer and individual markets. The small group market is exempt from mandated benefit requirements.

Background: HPV is one of the most common causes of sexually transmitted infection in the world. More than 100 different types of HPV exist, most of which are harmless. About 30 types are spread through sexual contact. Many people infected with HPV have no symptoms.

There are high-risk and low-risk types of HPV. High-risk HPV may cause abnormal pap smear results, and could lead to certain types of cancer. Low-risk HPV also may cause abnormal pap results or genital warts.

Approximately 20 million people are currently infected with HPV. At least 50% of sexually active men and women acquire genital HPV infection at some point in their lives. By age 50, at least 80% of women will have acquired genital HPV infection. About 6.2 million Americans get a new genital HPV infection each year.

Most women are diagnosed with HPV on the basis of abnormal pap tests. A pap test is the primary cancer-screening tool for cervical cancer or precancerous changes in the cervix, many of which are related to HPV. Also, a specific test is available to detect HPV DNA in women. The test may be used in women with mild pap test abnormalities, or in women who are over 30 at the time of pap testing. The results of HPV DNA testing can help health care providers decide if further tests or treatment are necessary.

No HPV tests are available for men.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Medicaid, Family Health Administration, Community Health Administration), Maryland Insurance Administration, Department of Budget and Management (Employee Benefits Division), Department of Legislative Services

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