

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Week February 8, 2021

State Issues

2021 New Bill Introductions

We are rapidly approaching the bill introduction deadline of next Friday, February 19. Below are some of the health care bills early in the session that are of interest to the Catholic health ministry. Note the last two bills on contracting with UC Health and changes to the End of Life Option Act. These will be two high priority bills for the Alliance. Over the next week, we will continue to keep you informed on the bills listed below, and more expected to be introduced.

AB 4 (Arambula) Medi-Cal: eligibility. This bill would extend Medi-Cal eligibility to undocumented Californians if all other criteria is met. The Legislature and the Governor have gone back and forth on this policy for several years, with the Governor concerned about the on-going costs associated with this policy.

AB 32 (Aguiar-Curry) Telehealth. This bill would continue the relaxation of certain barriers to telehealth care in the Medi-Cal program that were originally made to help the state respond to the COVID pandemic. We will need to compare this bill with the new policy the Administration is proposing, which includes some expansion of telehealth, but not all of the flexibilities providers and patients currently have available.

AB 369 (Kamlager) Medi-Cal: street medicine and utilization controls. While we are still exploring the language in the bill, the authors intent is to improve access and payment for Medi-Cal providers to offer care where people are – including homeless Californians.

AB 370 (Arambula) Ambulatory surgical centers. This bill would allow for certain elective cardiac care to be provided in ambulatory surgery centers – reducing cost and improving access. Dr. Arambula has been interested in this policy for the last few years but had been derailed by COVID.

AB 510 (Wood) Out-of-network health care benefits. The bill seeks to conform California law with the federal law passed late last year regarding surprise billing and the timelines needed for advanced notice.

SB 56 (Durazo) Medi-Cal: eligibility. This bill seeks to expand Medi-Cal eligibility to undocumented Californians over 65 if all other criteria is met. Senator Durazo and Dr. Arambula are working together on their bills to bring coverage to undocumented persons and are hoping they can convince the Governor that the care is worth the cost to the state.

SB 250 (Pan) Health care coverage. This bill reflects Dr. Pan's work with the California Medical Association to allow more doctors to earn an exemption to the health plan's often cumbersome utilization management review process – often delaying or inappropriately denying care.

(more)

<p>2021 New Bill Introductions</p>	<p>The bill would allow providers who have a track record of asking for prior authorizations that are appropriate to be excused from asking for prior authorizations for one year.</p> <p>SB 256 (Pan) Medi-Cal: covered benefits. This bill seeks to implement and define some of the work of the Administration in its implementation of the Cal-AIM, Medi-Cal reform proposal. The bill seeks to set some parameters for Medi-Cal managed care plans to provide “in lieu of services” for Medi-Cal beneficiaries, which can include housing or other needed social supports that have a direct impact on an enrollee’s overall health status.</p> <p>SB 326 (Pan) Health care coverage: federal health care reforms. Dr. Pan and Dr. Wood are teaming up on this bill to ensure California law maintains its health insurance mandate permanently, even if anything changes with the federal Affordable Care Act.</p> <p>SB 353 (Roth) Hospice: services to seriously ill patients. Senator Roth seeks to extend the sunset date of California’s hospice statute until 2027.</p> <p>SB 379 (Wiener) University of California: contracts: health facilities. This bill would preclude the UC health care system from contracting with any health care facility if that facility in any way restricts what the provider can do within their experience. This bill, while it applies to all hospitals and would have a detrimental effect on how hospitals partner with health care providers, it is targeted at religious-affiliated hospitals.</p> <p>SB 380 (Eggman) End of life. Senator Eggman is seeking to eliminate the sunset on California’s End of Life Option Act and remove some of the key patient protections included in the original measure, including eliminating the 15 day wait period between patient requests to obtain the medication and eliminating the need to complete an attestation statement.</p>
<p>Next Week’s Committees to Watch</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assembly Health: Informational Hearing on Telehealth ▪ Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3: Human Services Issues <p>Wednesday, February 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1: Human Services Issues ▪ Special Committee on Pandemic Response: Child Care <p>Friday, February 19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senate Budget Subcommittee 3: Medi-Cal, Behavioral Health, Family Health

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