

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 1997 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 574

Requesting the Department of Medical Assistance Services to examine the impact of the practices of pharmacy benefits manager firms on the Commonwealth's citizens and upon the health care market.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 1997

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 1997

WHEREAS, as the health insurance industry reconfigures and managed care programs become pervasive, the effects on patient care and small businesses delivering health services are far-reaching; and

WHEREAS, a recent development in managed care approaches is the implementation of or contracting for pharmacy benefits management; and

WHEREAS, pharmacy services are essential to the well-being of many elderly and disabled persons for the maintenance of their health; and

WHEREAS, appropriate pharmacy services can prevent hospital admissions and the need for emergency care — expensive services placing greater demands on society's resources; and

WHEREAS, the present management techniques practiced by some pharmacy benefits managers may interfere in the statutorily required physician-patient-pharmacist relationship; and

WHEREAS, personal consultation and direct knowledge of the patient's conditions and medications are an important part of handling many chronic conditions; and

WHEREAS, so-called "desk audits" are allegedly being conducted many months after the dispensing of prescriptions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Medical Assistance Services be requested to examine the practices of pharmacy benefits manager firms on the Commonwealth's citizens and upon the health care market. In conducting its study, the Department shall coordinate its efforts with any similar studies undertaken during the interim by the Department or by other state entities. In addition, the Department shall solicit input from such experts and interested parties as may be appointed to a special task force established pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 630 (1997), relating to the practice of therapeutic interchange.

Technical assistance shall be provided by the Bureau of Insurance within the Virginia State Corporation Commission. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department for this study, upon request.

The Department of Medical Assistance Services shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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