

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2392

Introduced by Assembly Member John A. Pérez

February 24, 2012

An act to add Article 4.6 (commencing with Section 14146) to Chapter 7 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2392, as introduced, John A. Pérez. Medi-Cal: interpreter services.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, under which qualified low-income individuals receive health care services. The Medi-Cal program is, in part, governed and funded by federal Medicaid Program provisions. Existing federal law provides for increased administrative funding for translation and interpretation services provided in connection with the enrollment of, retention of, and use of services under the Medicaid Program.

This bill would require the department to seek federal funding to establish a program to provide and reimburse for medical interpretation services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited English proficient (LEP), as prescribed.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to do all of the
2 following:

1 (a) Create a program that shall provide reliable access to
2 language interpretation for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited
3 English proficient.

4 (b) Establish a mechanism for accessing federal Medicaid
5 matching funds to provide funding for the program.

6 (c) Enable trained and qualified interpreters to meet the demand
7 for language services for a significant portion of Medi-Cal
8 beneficiaries with limited English proficiency.

9 (d) Facilitate accurate and timely communication between
10 limited English proficient patients and their health care providers,
11 which will improve quality of care, reduce medical errors, increase
12 patient understanding and compliance with health diagnoses and
13 care plans, and reduce the cost of health care by eliminating
14 unnecessary tests and other care.

15 SEC. 2. Article 4.6 (commencing with Section 14146) is added
16 to Chapter 7 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions
17 Code, to read:

18
19 Article 4.6. Medi-Cal Medical Interpretation Services
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21 14146. (a) The department shall seek federal funding to
22 establish a program to provide and reimburse for certified medical
23 interpretation services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited
24 English proficient (LEP) under Section 1903 of the federal Social
25 Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1396b(a)(2)(E)).

26 (b) The program shall offer medical interpreter services to
27 Medi-Cal providers serving Medi-Cal beneficiaries on either a
28 fee-for-service or managed care basis pursuant to this article.

29 (c) A health care provider or entity entering into a Medi-Cal
30 provider agreement or a Medi-Cal managed care contract with the
31 state, including Medi-Cal managed care organizations (MMCOs)
32 and their subcontracting plans, and fee-for-service providers, may
33 utilize the program to provide medical interpreter services to
34 Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

35 (d) All contracts between MMCOs and their subcontractors,
36 including health providers and other health plans, shall include
37 provisions describing access to medical interpreter services under
38 this program.

- 1 (e) The department shall pursue all available sources of federal
- 2 funding to establish and administer the program and shall seek any
- 3 federal approvals necessary to implement this article.

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