



Independence Edge

May 25, 2017

News about [Employer and Consumer Business](#)

Legislative Briefs: Pa. Premium Tax, Treat No Transport, and recently introduced bills

Premium tax expansion

Independence continues to oppose the health insurance [premium tax expansion](#) proposed by PA Governor Tom Wolf in his budget address. As proposed, the two percent tax would be expanded to include Blue plans, HMOs, and risk assuming non-licensed insurers (RANLIs), resulting in an estimated \$40 million impact on Independence customers including individual purchasers, small and large businesses, seniors with Medigap coverage, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) families.

Treat no transport reimbursement for emergency services

On April 20, Independence testified as part of an insurer panel before the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee on House Bill 1013. The bill would require health insurers to reimburse emergency medical service (EMS) providers in instances when emergency care is rendered to a member as a result of a 911 call but the member does not require, or refuses, subsequent emergency transport.

Independence does not currently reimburse in cases where emergency treatment is rendered absent a transport to a hospital. Independence's testimony detailed concerns around emergency service delivery in southeastern PA including providers choosing to remain out of network, thus exposing consumers to balance billing; and the high level of fraud among southeast PA EMS providers, which would only be exacerbated by mandating payment for such services.

Expanded scope of practice for nurse practitioners

The Senate has approved Senate Bill 25, which would permit qualified nurse practitioners to practice independently after fulfilling a three-year, 3,600-hour collaboration agreement with a doctor. The measure is supported by statewide nursing advocacy organizations, and opposed by the PA Medical Society.

Recently introduced legislation

Prescription drug transparency — Senate Bill 637 would create the Pharmaceutical Pricing Transparency Commission to review drug manufacturer pricing of brand and generic prescription drugs. The bill would require drug manufacturers to report certain information such as monies spent on marketing and advertising in bringing a drug to market.

Standardized prior authorization for medical services and prescription drugs — House Bill 1293 would standardize prior authorization processes used by health plans and utilization review entities, creating new requirements for the submission, review, and approval or denial of health care services.



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