

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, March 23, 2015

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW20

MEMBERS: Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Packer, Representatives Hixon, Perry, Romrell, Vander Woude, Beyeler, Redman, Troy, Rusche, Chew

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Vander Woude, Rusche

GUESTS: Sheila Pugatch, Medicaid; Darby Weston, Ada County Paramedics; Dia Gainor, Nat'l Assn. of State EMS Officials; Wayne Denny, DHW/EMS Bureau; Karl Malott, Nampa Fire Dept.; Robb Hickory, Canyon Co. Paramedic; Jeff Morrell, Intermountain Hospital; Toni Lawson, Idaho Hospital Assoc.; Gregory Janos, MD, Physician, Exec. Medical Director; Roberto Negron, IHB/SLCH St. Lukes.

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Packer** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18 and 19, 2015, meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

HCR 19: **Rep. Luke Malek**, District 4, presented **HCR 19**, which calls for a working group to review the Office of Performance Evaluation (OPE) recommendations and draft Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system legislation.

Darby Weston, Director, Ada County Paramedics, continued the presentation of **HCR 19**. EMS services have evolved to handle complex healthcare faster and more efficiently, resulting in better patient outcomes.

Beyond licensure, there is no legislative EMS governing direction for the Bureau of EMS and Preparedness. A previous task force work group focused on protection and control, which did not address governing the direction of Idaho's EMS.

The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC) request for an OPE study resulted in seven improvement recommendations, six of which require legislative action. Several counties have addressed the issues to create system structures that work well for their specific needs. This legislation places the EMS Bureau as the leadership entity to bring the stakeholders together for legislation development.

Answering a question, **Mr. Weston** said drafted legislation to effectively manage statewide issues requires recognition of the local need and governance for each county's system.

For the record, no one indicated their desire to testify.

MOTION: **Rep. Redman** made a motion to send **HCR 19** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Malek** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 298: **Jeff Morrell**, CEO, Intermountain Hospitals, presented **H 298**, a reimbursement bill for free standing psychiatric hospitals to change the Medicaid payment methodology. It provides 15 additional beds at a facility for the specific treatment of mentally ill adolescents. Without beds, individuals have been deflected to medical surgical facilities.

These are suicidal adolescents with or without a plan to kill themselves. They require treatment, plans, and assessments. The medical facilities must provide and charge for 24-hour sitters, psychiatric evaluations, diagnosis, and medication. Costs for free standing psychiatric hospitals are all inclusive. The patients are monitored every 15 minutes by staff trained for these conditions. Of their existing patients, 35% are Medicaid and the rest are commercially insured.

Answering questions, **Mr. Morrell** said the legislation adds 15 beds, and will help the 15 to 17 adolescents who have been deflected to other facilities in the valley. Facilities are either free standing or pavilions with a footprint to a main facility, such as St. Luke's. Pavilions receive a higher reimbursement rate because everything is based on the main facility size and expenses.

Lisa Hettinger, Administrator, Medicaid Program, Department of Health and Welfare (DHW), was invited to answer further questions. She said the increased reimbursement rate is 27% of the current Medicare rate. This method is used in other states and one the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) would find agreeable. Based on 2013 payment data, the current daily rate of \$136.40 will be increased to \$190.03 and apply to all Medicaid eligible individuals in the facility. The definition of private free standing mental health facilities currently applies to only one Idaho facility, Intermountain Hospital.

Toni Lawson, Vice President, Idaho Hospitals Association (IHA), testified the IHA has not taken a formal position on this legislation. She added a number of hospitals have voiced their support of the concept because they are not able to handle the current volume of this limited services population.

Dr. Gregory Janos, Physician, Executive Medical Director, St. Luke's Children's Hospital, testified **in support of H 298**. Medically stable patients are released after two to three days. This population may be medically stable but awaiting disposition and transfer to the closest and open mental health facility. The impact hampers care and safety to all of their patients, families, and staff. The use of the Emergency Room (ER) as an overflow area, with limited security, has resulted in patients leaving or attempting to harm others.

Roberto Negron, Child Psychiatrist, Physician, Director, Adolescent Services, Intermountain Hospital, testified **in support of H 298**. Suicide is the second leading cause of adolescent deaths in Idaho. This is a vulnerable and high risk population for completed suicide. The recently closed beds are the ones they want to reopen.

For the record, no one else indicated their desire to testify.

Chairman Wood commented some of the worst health care outcomes occur when the mentally ill are admitted to acute care inpatient facilities, endangering themselves and others in the facility. We are required to do everything we can to adequately and appropriately treat this population with mental health issues.

MOTION: **Rep. Redman** made a motion to send **H 298** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Perry** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Representative Wood
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary