

Legislative Update
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Little Action in Third Week

Three weeks into the 2018 legislative session and the wheels were still turning pretty slowly. The biggest Capitol news of the week came from Governor Sam Brownback, who announced he will be resigning January 31st to take a federal job as Ambassador of Religious Freedom.

Brownback's departure will bring Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer, a Johnson County plastic surgeon and 2018 gubernatorial candidate, in as the state's new governor. His ascension also means he will name a new lieutenant governor to take his place.

School finance continues to dominate the Capitol halls and the legislature is showing its fractures on the issue. The Legislature is tasked with having a response to the Supreme Court by April 30th, which means they will need to wrap up their work on it as early in March as possible. A cost study to help legislators craft a school finance package was contracted by legislative leaders and is due to them by March 15th.

Look for some health policy issues to start percolating next week, as issues ranging from KanCare to telemedicine are scheduled for public hearings. (See below for details on these.)

Telemedicine Legislation in House Committee

The House Health and Human Services Committee will hold a public hearing on [HB 2512](#), establishing telemedicine definitions, guidelines and insurance coverage parity. The bill comes as a result of talks and interim public hearings between legislative health leaders, KMS, insurers, and hospitals.

The bill complies with many of the principles outlined by KAFP and KMS in the legislative interim, including "coverage parity," meaning insurance coverage can't be denied based solely on the service being delivered telemedically. If the service is covered in face-to-face visits, it must be covered when delivered by telemedicine – though reimbursing at the same rate is not required.

HB 2512 clarifies that this coverage shall only be extended to physicians and mental health providers. This will likely be challenged by other health providers, including mid-level practitioners, but this bill was crafted following much discussion of who would be covered under this act.

The bill provides for continuity of care by requiring that follow-up information be sent to the patient's primary care provider within 72 hours, another key principle of the Academy. The Board of Healing Arts and the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board will be responsible for promulgating appropriate rules and regulations, particularly around prescribing and opioids.

The bill will be heard in committee on Thursday and KAFP will provide testimony supporting the bill.

New Bill Expands Tobacco Cessation Coverage

The Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee has introduced [SB 316](#), which would expand tobacco cessation services to those enrolled in KanCare/Medicaid. There are four key elements to the bill:

- KanCare would cover all FDA-approved smoking cessation medications and would include telephone counseling services;
- There would be no limitation on the number of times KanCare beneficiaries could receive these services;
- No prior authorization is to be required; and,
- No co-pays or cost sharing shall be required.

The bill has not yet been scheduled for a hearing, but KAFP will keep members posted on the bill's progress.

Family Doctor of the Day

KAFP is again sponsoring the Family Doctor of the Day (FDOD) program during the Kansas legislative session. Licensed physicians, including residents, volunteer to provide mostly-minor health needs to legislators and their staff. The Legislature highly values and appreciates access to these services, especially when so many are away from their hometown primary care physicians.

Appreciation goes to the following KAFP members, who provided FDOD care this past week: **Dr. Sheryl Beard**, Andover; **Dr. Jen Brull**, Plainville; and **Dr. R.C. Trotter**, Dodge City. There are still openings in the FDOD schedule, to those waiting to sign up!

Relevant Legislative Committee Meetings for the Week of Jan 22-26

Tuesday, Jan 30

9:30am, Senate Public Health & Welfare, 118-N

Final Action: [SB 195](#) – creating a suspended eligibility status for Medicaid recipients

10:30am, Senate Ways & Means, 548-S

Hearing: [SB 300](#) – Prohibiting substantial change to the KanCare Program without legislative approval

Wednesday, Jan 31

9:30am, Senate Public Health & Welfare, 118-N

Update on: [HB 2031](#) – establishing the advisory council on palliative care & quality of life and palliative care education program

10:30am, Senate Ways & Means, 548-S

Cont'd hearing: [SB 300](#) – Prohibiting substantial change to the KanCare Program without legislative approval

1:30pm, House Health & Human Services, 546-S

Hearing: [HB 2496](#) – Enacting the nurse licensure compact (APRNs not included)

Thursday, Feb 1

9:30am, Senate Public Health & Welfare, 118-N

Hearing: [SB 312](#) – Licensure of dental therapists

1:30pm, House Health & Human Services, 546-S

Hearing: [HB 2512](#) – Establishing the Kansas Telemedicine Act