

Legislative Update
February 9, 2018
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Senate to Take On KanCare Expansion

The Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee will hold a public hearing on [SB 38](#), which would extend Medicaid health care coverage to an estimated 120,000 Kansans. These are individuals who are too “rich” to qualify for Medicaid, but too poor to afford traditional health plans. In most cases, they are employed in lower wage jobs and in jobs that do not offer health insurance.

John Feehan, MD, KAFP’s president, will deliver testimony on behalf of the Academy on Wednesday, February 14, stressing not only facts, but also sharing his personal experiences caring for populations that could be impacted by this legislation.

Last year, the Legislature passed an identical bill, but Governor Brownback vetoed it and the Legislature’s veto override was unsuccessful.

It is not completely clear how Governor Colyer would handle such a bill, if this legislature is successful in passing SB 38. He has previously indicated he was not in favor of KanCare expansion, but he has options before him. Besides vetoing or signing into law, the governor has the option of doing neither and allowing the bill to become law, without his signature, in ten days following submission to his office. Stakeholders statewide are contacting the governor’s office urging him to sign SB 38, if it comes to his desk.

Telemedicine Bill Change

Earlier in the session the House Health and Human Services Committee held a hearing on [HB 2512](#), establishing telemedicine definitions, guidelines and insurance coverage parity. The bill came 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.

A similar bill, [HB 2674](#), has been introduced to replace HB 2512 and a brief hearing will be held on Monday, February 12. The primary change in the new bill is that section six of HB 2512, relating to abortion, has been removed. The primary stakeholders who crafted the bill have no public policy position on abortion and, therefore, wanted a bill that reflected their telemedicine public policy goals, clean of additions. Such a section may still be amended to the new bill, however.

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 over the past two weeks: **Dr. Chad Johanning**, Lawrence; **Dr. Tara Neil**, Wichita; **Dr. John McMaster**, Wichita; **Dr. Doug Gruenbacher**, Quinter; and **Dr. Danelle Perry**, Manhattan. There are still openings in the FDOD schedule, to those waiting to sign up!

Committee Action Scheduled February 12-16

Monday, Feb 12

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

Hearings on:

- [HB 2674](#) – *Establishing the Kansas Telemedicine Act (replaces HB 2512, for which hearings were already held)*
- [HB 2573](#) – *Providing for the study and investigation of maternal deaths by KDHE*

Tuesday, Feb 13

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

Hearings on:

- [SB 387](#) – *Authorizing creation of a statewide protocol for the practice of pharmacy (rather than physician-to-pharmacist protocols, as currently exist)*
- [SB 377](#) – *Allowing pharmacists to administer drugs by injection, pursuant to a prescription order*

Wednesday, Feb 14

9:30am, Senate Public Health & Welfare, Room 152-S

Hearing on: [SB 38](#) – *Establishing the KanCare Bridge to a Healthy Future program (expansion)*

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

Hearing on: [HB 2575](#) – *Enacting the Patient Right to Shop Act*

Thursday, Feb 15

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

Hearing on: [SB 304](#) – *Establishing restrictions on health insurance use of step therapy*

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

Informational briefing: *Opioid epidemic*