

CHAPTER 97-171

Senate Bill No. 244

An act relating to managed care; amending s. 627.6472, F.S.; requiring exclusive provider organizations to provide direct patient access to a dermatologist under contract with the organization and to develop criteria for compliance; providing a definition; amending s. 641.31, F.S.; requiring health maintenance organizations to provide direct patient access to a dermatologist under contract with the organization and to develop criteria for compliance; providing a definition; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (16) is added to section 627.6472, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, to read:

627.6472 Exclusive provider organizations.—

(16) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, an exclusive provider organization which offers dermatological services shall provide direct patient access, for office visits and minor procedures and testing, to a dermatologist who is under contract with the exclusive provider organization. The term “direct patient access” means the ability of an insured to obtain such services without a referral or other authorization before receiving services. The exclusive provider organization shall, by July 1, 1997, develop criteria for compliance with the provisions of this subsection which do not impede or inhibit access to dermatological services for policyholders of the exclusive provider organization. The criteria may include a maximum of 5 office visits to a dermatologist without prior authorization for a dermatologic problem within a 12-month period.

Section 2. Subsection (29) is added to section 641.31, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, to read:

641.31 Health maintenance contracts.—

(29) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, a health maintenance organization which offers dermatological services shall provide direct patient access, for office visits and minor procedures and testing, to a dermatologist who is under contract with the health maintenance organization. The term “direct patient access” means the ability of a subscriber to obtain such services without a referral or other authorization before receiving services. The health maintenance organization shall, by July 1, 1997, develop criteria for compliance with the provisions of this subsection which do not impede or inhibit access to dermatological services for policyholders of the health maintenance organization. The criteria may include a maximum of 5 office visits to a dermatologist without prior authorization for a dermatologic problem within a 12-month period.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Became a law without the Governor's approval May 30, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1997.