

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 77

BY SENATOR FRED MILLS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study and make recommendations on best practices for coordinating healthcare services for patients with cancer.

WHEREAS, cancer is a complex disease, requiring multiple doctor appointments, medications, and treatments as well as support and follow-up care; and

WHEREAS, according to a study by the Institute of Medicine, patients with cancer often receive poorly coordinated care in multiple settings from many providers; and

WHEREAS, coordination of care is critical in order for all of the healthcare needs of a patient to be met including ensuring that all chronic conditions are under control during cancer treatment; and

WHEREAS, a lack of care coordination increases the risk for poor outcomes, limits the patient's quality of life, and can lead to higher healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, care coordination includes communication and the sharing of knowledge between healthcare providers and assistance with transitions of care; and

WHEREAS, one way to promote care coordination is the use of an electronic health record which allows healthcare providers treating people in a variety of settings to exchange and continuously update a patient's clinical data and then present that information in a format that other providers can access easily; and

WHEREAS, many existing electronic health record systems currently use incompatible means of acquiring, processing, storing, and communicating data; and

WHEREAS, some healthcare facilities may not provide patients effective access to their own data; and

WHEREAS, this lack of interoperability may ultimately result in the patient undergoing duplicate tests or procedures which is burdensome on the patient and unnecessarily increases healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, closing communication gaps between healthcare providers can lead to more effective care coordination, with increasing awareness of how each healthcare provider's actions impact other provider's actions; and

WHEREAS, innovative ways to improve care coordination for patients with cancer are needed to achieve better healthcare outcomes, improve patient experience of care, and lower healthcare costs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study and make recommendations on best practices for coordinating healthcare services for patients with cancer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED in completing the study, the department shall focus on the following areas:

(1) The use of electronic health records to facilitate a patient's access to his own records.

(2) The need for interoperability between electronic health record systems to limit duplication of healthcare services and decrease healthcare costs.

(3) Efforts to facilitate unhindered communication and encourage cooperation between healthcare providers as a key element of care coordination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED in completing the study, the department shall seek input from interested stakeholders, including but not limited to healthcare providers, health insurance issuers, and cancer advocacy groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than February 1, 2023, the department shall prepare and submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE