
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO STUDY THE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL IMPACT
OF MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR USE OF MEDICAL
SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS.

1 WHEREAS, thousands of patients die unnecessarily each year
2 in hospitals from unexpected accidents and errors; and
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4 WHEREAS, reasons include insufficient staffing and
5 ineffective systems in place to identify acute care hospital
6 medical-surgical patients in distress; and
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8 WHEREAS, in 1999, the Institute of Medicine issued a
9 clarion call with its report, "To Err Is Human" stating that
10 each year approximately 200,000 people die in United States
11 hospitals from preventable errors and mistakes, of which nearly
12 twenty per cent of those deaths occur from "failure-to-rescue";
13 and
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15 WHEREAS, a "Patient's Right to Safety" is an emerging legal
16 entitlement and national standard-of-care for every acute care
17 hospital patient; and
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19 WHEREAS, medical-surgical units and nursing stations of a
20 typical acute care hospital are where most patients receive
21 noncritical care, generally involving regularly scheduled
22 nursing rounds every four to five hours; nevertheless, acute or
23 unexpected clinical events can go unnoticed for critical minutes
24 or hours, until the next visit by a physician or nurse; and
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26 WHEREAS, although rapid response teams are being promoted,
27 there are no systems which focus on the medical-surgical ward of
28 the acute care hospital, where nearly seventy-five per cent of
29 patients typically receive care, for identifying and tracking
30 patients in distress; and



1 WHEREAS, technological solutions have been advocated to
2 augment patient safety on the medical-surgical wards of acute
3 care hospitals; and
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5 WHEREAS, a medical surveillance system is an automated
6 early alert system that identifies at-risk patients with an
7 invisible, noncontact device that provides accurate and
8 continuous observation of heart and respiratory rates--the two
9 most critical vital signs-- while the patient is in bed, and
10 immediately notifies nursing staff upon detecting a life-
11 threatening condition; and
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13 WHEREAS, a medical surveillance system enables more
14 efficient use of resources and staff by enabling nursing staff
15 to be aware of, and respond to, precipitous patient
16 deterioration, checks on the patient constantly, and calls the
17 nurses for help only if the patient is at serious risk; and
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19 WHEREAS, this critical capability will enable medical
20 surveillance systems to become a standard-of-care for medical-
21 surgical units in acute care hospitals; and
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23 WHEREAS, because of the absence of health insurance
24 coverage, hospitals may be reluctant to provide a medical
25 surveillance system to its patients; and
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27 WHEREAS, section 23-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS)
28 requires that "[b]efore any legislative measure that mandates
29 health insurance coverage for specific health services, specific
30 diseases, or certain providers of health care services as part
31 of individual or group health insurance policies, can be
32 considered, there shall be concurrent resolutions passed
33 requesting the auditor to prepare and submit to the legislature
34 a report that assesses both the social and financial effects of
35 the proposed mandated coverage"; and
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37 WHEREAS, section 23-51, HRS, further provides that the
38 concurrent resolutions shall designate a specific legislative
39 bill that:
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41 (1) Has been introduced in the Legislature; and
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43 (2) Includes, at a minimum, information identifying the:
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- 1 (A) Specific health service, disease, or provider
- 2 that would be covered;
- 3
- 4 (B) Extent of the coverage;
- 5
- 6 (C) Target groups that would be covered;
- 7
- 8 (D) Limits on utilization, if any; and
- 9
- 10 (E) Standards of care; and
- 11

12 WHEREAS, section 23-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes, further
 13 specifies the minimum information required for assessing the
 14 social and financial impact of the proposed health coverage
 15 mandate in the Auditor's report; and

16
 17 WHEREAS, S.B. No. 409, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 (2008) mandates
 18 coverage of a medical surveillance system that is for all
 19 policies and contracts, hospital and medical service plan
 20 contracts, medical service corporation contracts, and health
 21 maintenance organization plans and contracts; and

22
 23 WHEREAS, the Legislature believes that mandatory health
 24 insurance coverage for a medical surveillance system, as
 25 provided in S.B. No. 409, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 (2008) will
 26 substantially enhance patient safety and provide a new standard
 27 of care for the people of this State; now, therefore,

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 29 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth
 30 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, the
 31 House of Representatives concurring, that the Auditor is
 32 requested to conduct an impact assessment report, pursuant to
 33 sections 23-51 and 23-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes, of the social
 34 and financial impacts of mandating coverage of medical
 35 surveillance systems for all policies and contracts, hospital
 36 and medical service plan contracts, medical service corporation
 37 contracts, and health maintenance organization plans and
 38 contracts, as provided in S.B. No. 409, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 (2008);
 39 and

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 41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Health Systems
 42 Corporation (HHSC) is requested to conduct a pilot study to
 43 determine the social and financial impact to the system; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor and HHSC are
2 requested to submit findings and recommendations to the
3 Legislature, including any necessary implementing legislation,
4 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
5 Session of 2009; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
8 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor, Director of
9 Health, and Chief Executive Officer of HHSC.

