
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TELEHEALTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many residents of
2 Hawaii are unable to obtain timely and appropriate health care
3 and behavioral health care due to shortages of primary,
4 specialty, and behavioral care providers. Vulnerable residents,
5 such as the elderly, experience even greater barriers to
6 provider access. These barriers include issues relating to
7 fixed or limited financial resources, lack of physical mobility
8 or other disability, cognitive impairment, and transportation.

9 Telehealth is a viable solution to maximize existing local
10 resources and increase patient convenience and compliance.
11 However, the best available data indicates that the use of
12 telehealth is limited in the State. No more than fifteen per
13 cent of practicing providers in the State report a telehealth
14 experience, even though the State has among the most progressive
15 telehealth laws in the nation.

16 Preliminary findings from the 2017 State Telehealth Summit
17 confirm that provider comfort and patient expectations are the



1 most significant barriers to greater telehealth adoption.
2 Department of health research, including direct observation of
3 strong telehealth programs in other jurisdictions, reveals that
4 staff support is needed to ensure that both the patient and
5 technology are situated correctly for a telehealth encounter.
6 Ideally, staff support should be situated at both the provider's
7 and the patient's location. Support staff for the patient,
8 however, is critical when the patient is in a non-traditional
9 health care setting such as a home, community center, or school.

10 The purpose of this Act is to fund a pilot project to
11 expose the State's health care providers and patients to the
12 benefits of telehealth. The goals of the project are to
13 increase provider adoption of telehealth, support health care
14 workforce development related to telehealth, and evaluate the
15 clinical and administrative efficacy of various telehealth
16 delivery models.

17 SECTION 2. (a) The department of health shall implement a
18 telehealth pilot project.

19 (b) The pilot project shall:

20 (1) Assist residents at two distinct project sites, both
21 of which shall have a medically underserved area



1 designation by the United States Department of Health
2 and Human Services; provided that one site shall be
3 located in a rural county and the other site shall be
4 located in an urban county;

5 (2) Utilize telehealth as the primary means to deliver
6 health care; and

7 (3) Include at least one federally qualified health center
8 or rural health clinic in each project site.

9 (c) Within six months of the exhaustion of all pilot
10 project funds, the department of health shall make available to
11 the public an evaluation report on pilot project outcomes,
12 including the quality of care, patient satisfaction, training
13 and workforce development issues, and financial sustainability
14 of telehealth activities.

15 (d) Chapters 103D and 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall
16 not apply to procurements made pursuant to this Act for a period
17 of twelve months following the effective date of this Act;
18 provided that the department of health shall obtain goods and
19 services for this pilot project only in a manner that is cost-
20 effective and provides the most benefit to the pilot program on
21 contractual terms that are most advantageous to the State.



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for a
4 telehealth pilot project.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
6 health for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

DOH; Telehealth; Pilot Project; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Department of Health to conduct a telehealth pilot project and publish an evaluation report on the pilot project outcomes. Exempts the pilot project from the State Procurement Code for a period of twelve months. (SB2891 HD1)

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