

# Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

One Baldwin Street • Montpelier, VT 05633-5701 • (802) 828-2295 • Fax: (802) 828-2483

## *FISCAL NOTE*

Date: February 28, 2018

Prepared by: Nolan Langweil

### **S.224 - An act relating to co-payment limits for visits to chiropractors**

*As Introduced*

S.224 proposes to require health insurance plans to limit the co-payment for certain visits to a chiropractor to not more than the co-payment for a visit to a primary care physician, specifically for care and services billed as a new patient office visit, an established patient office visit, a new or established patient consultation, or self-care and home management training.

#### **State Employee Health Plan**

The State of Vermont state employee plan has two benefit designs, one which does not take co-pays for either chiropractic or primary care visits, and one which takes the same co-pays for both. Therefore, S.224 as proposed would have no new fiscal impact on the State Employees Health Plans.

#### **Other Health Insurance Plans in Vermont**

According to estimates provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT), this legislation will have an average premium impact of between \$1.25 per member per month (PMPM) to \$1.90 per member per month (PMPM) depending on the benefit design of each plan. We do not have estimates from other insurers at this time. Lowering chiropractic co-pays could have a utilization impact. However it is unclear if (and by how much) any potential increases in utilization of chiropractic services would be off-set by diverting services from otherwise costly treatments.<sup>1</sup>

<b>BCBSVT Line of Business</b>	<b>Average Impact PMPM</b>
Qualified Health Plans	\$1.90
Large Group Insured	\$1.25

Under ERISA self-insured plans would not be subject to this legislation.<sup>2</sup>

Note: Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) fall under four “metal levels” – bronze, silver, gold, and platinum based on actuarial values (AV). Other co-pays may be adjusted to ensure plans fall within established AV values bands to meet certain metal level criteria.

---

<sup>1</sup> New Hampshire passed a similar law in 2014 (HB 1281). A 2017 study of the impacts of the law found that chiropractic cost-sharing declined and utilization increased.

[https://www.nh.gov/insurance/reports/documents/hb1281chiro\\_pt\\_copaystudy.pdf](https://www.nh.gov/insurance/reports/documents/hb1281chiro_pt_copaystudy.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The Employer Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 is a federal law that sets minimum standards for most voluntarily established pension and health plans in private industry.