
This act summary is provided for the convenience of the public and members of the General Assembly. It is intended to provide a general summary of the act and may not be exhaustive. It has been prepared by the staff of the Office of Legislative Council without input from members of the General Assembly. It is not intended to aid in the interpretation of legislation or to serve as a source of legislative intent.

Act No. 53 (S.31). Health; hospitals; price transparency; health information technology; Vermont Health Information Exchange

An act relating to informed health care financial decision making and the consent policy for the Vermont Health Information Exchange

This act specifies that patients of hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers must receive an itemized, detailed, and understandable explanation of charges and must be provided with information about financial assistance and billing and collections practices. It requires the Green Mountain Care Board to collect and review certain data from psychiatric hospitals, to examine health care price transparency initiatives in other states, and to consider and provide recommendations on potential modifications to health care billing processes. The act directs the Board to provide its findings and recommendations regarding price transparency initiatives and billing processes to the legislative committees of jurisdiction by November 15, 2019.

The act specifies that, beginning on March 1, 2020, patients' electronic health information contained in the Vermont Health Information Exchange will be accessible to health care facilities, health care professionals, and public and private payers unless a patient affirmatively opts not to have his or her electronic health information shared in that manner. The act requires the Department of Vermont Health Access to administer a robust stakeholder process to develop an implementation strategy for the opt-out consent policy and to provide updates to the legislative committees of jurisdiction and the Green Mountain Care Board by August 1 and November 1, 2019, with a final report due by January 15, 2020.

Multiple effective dates, beginning on June 10, 2019