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H.795

Introduced by Representatives Rogers of Waterville, Christensen of  
Weathersfield, Cordes of Lincoln, Donahue of Northfield,  
Houghton of Essex, Page of Newport City, and Smith of Derby

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Health; health care administration; Green Mountain Care Board;  
hospitals; price transparency

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require  
hospitals to report to the Green Mountain Care Board their actual charges for  
health care services delivered to patients without health insurance or other  
health coverage. It would direct the Green Mountain Care Board to use  
information from Vermont's all-payer claims database and the information  
from the hospitals on their private-pay patient charges to make available to the  
public information on the average charge for each health care service at each  
Vermont hospital for insured patients and for private-pay patients.

An act relating to increasing hospital price transparency

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

~~Sec. 1, 18 V.S.A. § 9410 is amended to read:~~

1 ~~§ 9410. HEALTH CARE DATABASE~~

2 (a)(1) The Board shall establish and maintain a unified health care database  
3 to enable the Board to carry out its duties under this chapter, chapter 220 of  
4 this title, and Title 8, including:

5 (A) determining the capacity and distribution of existing resources;

6 (B) identifying health care needs and informing health care policy;

7 (C) evaluating the effectiveness of intervention programs on  
8 improving patient outcomes;

9 (D) comparing costs between various treatment settings and  
10 approaches;

11 (E) providing information to consumers and purchasers of health  
12 care; and

13 (F) improving the quality and affordability of patient health care and  
14 health care coverage.

15 (2) The Board shall use information from the database and the  
16 information on hospitals' private-pay patient charges provided to the Board  
17 pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section to make available to the public on  
18 the Board's website information regarding the average actual amounts charged  
19 for each health care service or bundle of services at each Vermont hospital for  
20 insured patients and for private-pay patients. The Board shall update the  
21 information on its website at least annually.

1 ~~(b) The database shall contain unique patient and provider identifiers and a~~  
2 uniform coding system, and shall reflect all health care utilization, costs, and  
3 resources in this State, and health care utilization and costs for services  
4 provided to Vermont residents in another state.

5 (c)(1) Health insurers, health care providers, health care facilities, and  
6 governmental agencies shall file reports, data, schedules, statistics, or other  
7 information determined by the Board to be necessary to carry out the purposes  
8 of this section. Such information may include:

9 ~~(1)(A)~~ health insurance claims and enrollment information used by  
10 health insurers;

11 ~~(2)(B)~~ information relating to hospitals filed under subchapter 7 of this  
12 chapter (hospital budget reviews); and

13 ~~(3)(C)~~ any other information relating to health care costs, prices,  
14 quality, utilization, or resources required by the Board to be filed.

15 (2) Each hospital shall file with the Board its actual charges for health  
16 care services delivered to patients without health insurance or other health  
17 coverage, not including any reduced charge amounts for patients who qualify  
18 for the hospital's charity care program.

19 (d) The Board may by rule establish the types of information to be filed  
20 under this section, and the time and place and the manner in which such  
21 information shall be filed.

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~~Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.~~

*Sec. 1. GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD; PRICE TRANSPARENCY  
DASHBOARD; PRIVATE PAY PRICING; REPORT*

*On or before February 1, 2021, the Green Mountain Care Board shall report to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance regarding its progress in developing and implementing a public, interactive, Internet-based price transparency dashboard for use by health care consumers, including the results of the Board's efforts to validate VHCURES data through comparison with hospital discharge data and with information from the health insurers and the status of the Board's work with the various payers to incorporate location information into VHCURES data. The Board shall also include in the report any information ascertained from the validation process regarding payments for services by patients without health insurance coverage, as well as the information the hospitals track relating to self-pay patients and the means by which hospitals may provide information to the Board in the future regarding actual amounts paid for services by patients without health insurance coverage.*

*Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 9411 is added to read:*

*§ 9411. INTERACTIVE PRICE TRANSPARENCY DASHBOARD*

*(a) The Green Mountain Care Board shall develop and maintain a public, interactive, Internet-based price transparency dashboard that allows consumers to compare health care prices for certain health care services across the State. Using data from the Vermont Healthcare Claims Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) established pursuant to section 9410 of this title, the dashboard shall provide the range of actual allowed amounts for selected health care services, showing both the amount paid by the health insurer or other payer and the amount of the member's responsibility, and shall allow the consumer to sort the information by geographic location, by health care provider, by payer type, and by the specific health care procedure or health care service. The Board shall provide a link on the dashboard to the statewide comparative hospital quality report published by the Commissioner of Health pursuant to section 9405b of this title.*

(b) The Board shall update the information in the interactive price transparency dashboard at least annually.

*Sec. 3. INTERACTIVE PRICE TRANSPARENCY DASHBOARD;  
DEMONSTRATION; RECOMMENDATIONS; REPORT*

(a) On or before February 1, 2022, the Green Mountain Care Board shall provide a demonstration of the interactive price transparency dashboard developed pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 9411 to the House Committees on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance.

(b) In addition to the demonstration required by subsection (a) of this section, on or before February 1, 2022, the Green Mountain Care Board shall provide recommendations to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance regarding ways in which the price transparency dashboard may be expanded to provide information on health care quality, on actual amounts charged to patients without health insurance coverage after the application of any relevant charity care policies or other discounts, and on other claims and payment data not currently collected by VHCURES.

*Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES*

(a) Secs. 1 (Green Mountain Care Board; price transparency dashboard; private pay pricing; report), 3 (interactive price transparency dashboard; demonstration; recommendations; report), and this section shall take effect on passage.

(b) Sec. 2 (18 V.S.A. § 9411) shall take effect on July 1, 2020, with the interactive price transparency dashboard becoming available for use by the public as soon as it is operational, but in no event later than February 15, 2022.