

House Engrossed

health care insurance; amendments

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Regular Session
2021

HOUSE BILL 2119

AN ACT

REPEALING SECTIONS 20-110 AND 20-111, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-118, 20-464 AND 20-821, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; REPEALING SECTION 20-827, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-832, 20-1061, 20-1074, 20-2301 AND 20-2311, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; REPEALING SECTIONS 20-2318 AND 20-2320, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-2502, 20-2531 AND 20-2532, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO HEALTH CARE INSURANCE.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Repeal

3 Sections 20-110 and 20-111, Arizona Revised Statutes, are repealed.

4 Sec. 2. Section 20-118, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
5 read:

6 20-118. Prohibition; definitions

7 A. A person subject to this title shall not restrict or prohibit,
8 by means of a policy or contract, whether written or otherwise, a licensed
9 health care professional's good faith communication with the health care
10 professional's patient concerning the patient's health care or medical
11 needs, treatment options, health care risks or benefits.

12 B. A person subject to this title shall not terminate a contract
13 with or refuse to renew a contract with a health care professional solely
14 because the health care professional in good faith does any of the
15 following:

16 1. Advocates in private or in public on behalf of a patient.

17 2. Assists a patient in seeking reconsideration of a decision made
18 by the person to deny coverage for a health care service.

19 3. Reports a violation of law to an appropriate authority.

20 C. For the purposes of this section:

21 1. "Contract" means a written contract under which a licensed
22 health care professional agrees to provide specified health care services
23 to covered persons. Contract does not include a contract of salaried
24 employment.

25 2. "Health care professional" has the same meaning prescribed in
26 section 20-3151.

27 3. "PERSON" INCLUDES A SERVICE CORPORATION SUBJECT TO CHAPTER 4,
28 ARTICLE 3 OF THIS TITLE AND A HEALTH CARE SERVICES ORGANIZATION SUBJECT TO
29 CHAPTER 4, ARTICLE 9 OF THIS TITLE.

30 Sec. 3. Section 20-464, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
31 read:

32 20-464. Prohibiting payment for services to persons other
33 than the assignee

34 A. If an insured assigns to a ~~covered~~ health care provider
35 performing services covered by the contract payment for benefits under a
36 disability insurance contract, a group disability insurance contract or a
37 blanket disability INSURANCE contract, the contract does not prohibit
38 assignments and the assignment is delivered to the insurer, payment may be
39 made only to the health care provider to whom payment has been assigned.

40 B. NOTWITHSTANDING CHAPTER 4, ARTICLE 3 OF THIS TITLE, THIS SECTION
41 APPLIES TO A SERVICE CORPORATION.

42 Sec. 4. Section 20-821, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
43 read:

44 20-821. Scope of article; rules; authority of director

45 A. Hospital service corporations, medical service corporations,
46 dental service corporations, optometric service corporations and hospital,

1 medical, dental and optometric service corporations incorporated in this
2 state are governed by this article and are exempt from all other
3 provisions of this title, except as expressly provided by this article and
4 any rule adopted by the director pursuant to section 20-143 relating to
5 contracts of such service corporations. No insurance law enacted after
6 January 1, 1955 applies to such corporations unless the law specifically
7 refers to corporations.

8 B. Chapter 2, ~~article~~ **ARTICLES 8 AND** 12 of this title, sections
9 20-223, 20-234, 20-261, 20-261.01, 20-261.02, 20-261.03, 20-261.04,
10 20-1133, 20-1377, 20-1408, 20-1692, 20-1692.01, 20-1692.02 and 20-1692.03
11 and chapters 15, 17 and 20 of this title and any rules adopted to
12 implement these provisions apply to all corporations governed by this
13 article.

14 C. Chapter 21 of this title applies to a hospital service
15 corporation, a medical service corporation or a hospital and medical
16 service corporation.

17 Sec. 5. Repeal

18 Section 20-827, Arizona Revised Statutes, is repealed.

19 Sec. 6. Section 20-832, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
20 read:

21 20-832. Limitation on salaries

22 A corporation shall not:

23 1. Pay to any officer, ~~agent or employee~~ of the corporation any
24 salary, compensation or emolument amounting in any year to more than ~~five~~
25 ~~thousand dollars~~ \$5,000, unless the board of directors of the
26 corporation, ~~first~~ authorizes the salary, compensation or emolument.

27 2. Make any agreement with any officer, ~~agent or employee~~ whereby
28 the corporation agrees that for any services rendered or to be rendered
29 the officer, ~~agent or employee~~ will receive a salary, compensation or
30 emolument for a period of more than three years from the date of the
31 agreement.

32 3. Pay any bonus, commission or dividend to any director of the
33 corporation.

34 Sec. 7. Section 20-1061, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
35 read:

36 20-1061. Prohibited practices; definition

37 A. Chapter 2, article 6 of this title relating to unfair trade
38 practices and frauds applies to health care services organizations, except
39 to the extent the director determines that the nature of health care
40 services organizations renders particular provisions inappropriate.

41 ~~B. A person subject to this article shall not:~~

42 ~~1. Restrict or prohibit, by means of a policy or contract, whether~~
43 ~~written or otherwise, a licensed health care professional's good faith~~
44 ~~communication with the health care professional's patient concerning the~~
45 ~~patient's health care or medical needs, treatment options, health care~~
46 ~~risks or benefits.~~

1 ~~2. Terminate a contract with or refuse to renew a contract with a~~
2 ~~health care professional solely because the professional in good faith~~
3 ~~does any of the following:~~

4 ~~(a) Advocates in private or in public on behalf of a patient.~~

5 ~~(b) Assists a patient in seeking reconsideration of a decision made~~
6 ~~by the person to deny coverage for a health care service.~~

7 ~~(c) Reports a violation of law to an appropriate authority.~~

8 ~~C.~~ B. A contract between the health care services organization and
9 a health care professional shall not contain a financial incentive plan
10 that includes a specific payment made to or withheld from the health care
11 professional as an inducement to deny, reduce, limit or delay medically
12 necessary care that is covered by the evidence of coverage with an
13 enrollee or group of enrollees for a specific disease or condition. This
14 section does not prohibit per diem or per case payments, diagnostic
15 related grouping payments, or financial incentive plans, including
16 capitation payments or shared risk arrangements, that are not connected to
17 specific medical decisions relating to an enrollee or a group of enrollees
18 for a specific disease or condition. Each health care services
19 organization shall file with its annual report a written statement with
20 the director that certifies that the health care services organization is
21 in compliance with this subsection.

22 ~~D.~~ C. Unless preempted under federal law or unless federal law
23 imposes greater requirements than this section, this section applies to a
24 provider sponsored health care services organization.

25 ~~E.~~ D. For the purposes of this section, "health care professional"
26 has the same meaning prescribed in section 20-3151.

27 Sec. 8. Section 20-1074, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
28 read:

29 20-1074. Contract termination; duty to report; provision for
30 continued services during insolvency; definitions

31 A. ~~Each month~~ A health care services organization shall submit
32 **QUARTERLY** to the director a list of all ~~written~~ provider contracts that
33 have been terminated during the prior ~~month~~ **THREE MONTHS**. The list shall
34 be in writing and shall include the name and address of each provider
35 whose contract has been terminated but shall not include the reasons for
36 termination.

37 B. A health care services organization shall include in its
38 contracts with providers a statement that requires the provider to provide
39 services to enrollees at the same rates and subject to the same terms and
40 conditions established in the contract for the duration of the period
41 after the health care services organization is declared insolvent, until
42 the earliest of the following:

43 1. A determination by the court that the organization cannot
44 provide adequate assurance it will be able to pay contract providers'
45 claims for covered services that were rendered after the health care
46 services organization is declared insolvent.

1 2. A determination by the court that the insolvent organization is
2 unable to pay contract providers' claims for covered services that were
3 rendered after the health care services organization is declared
4 insolvent.

5 3. A determination by the court that continuation of the contract
6 would constitute undue hardship to the provider.

7 4. A determination by the court that the health care services
8 organization has satisfied its obligations to all enrollees under its
9 health care plans.

10 C. Unless preempted under federal law or unless federal law imposes
11 greater requirements than this section, this section applies to a provider
12 sponsored health care services organization.

13 D. For the purposes of this section:

14 1. "Court" has the same meaning prescribed in section 20-611.

15 2. "Delinquency proceeding" has the same meaning prescribed in
16 section 20-611.

17 Sec. 9. Section 20-2301, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
18 read:

19 20-2301. Definitions; late enrollee coverage

20 A. In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

21 1. "Accountable health plan" means an entity that offers, issues or
22 otherwise provides a health benefits plan and THAT is approved by the
23 director as an accountable health plan pursuant to section 20-2303.

24 2. "Affiliation period" means a period of two months, or three
25 months for late enrollees, that under the terms of the health benefits
26 plan offered by a health care services organization must expire before the
27 health benefits plan becomes effective and in which the health care
28 services organization is not required to provide health care services or
29 benefits and cannot charge the participant or beneficiary a premium for
30 any coverage during the period.

31 3. "Base premium rate" means, for each rating period, the lowest
32 premium rate that could have been charged under a rating system by the
33 accountable health plan to small employers for health benefits plans
34 involving the same or similar coverage, family size and composition, and
35 geographic area.

36 ~~4. "Basic health benefit plan" means a plan that is developed by a~~
37 ~~committee established by the legislature and that is adopted by the~~
38 ~~director.~~

39 ~~5.~~ 4. "Bona fide association" means, for a health benefits plan
40 issued by an accountable health plan, an association that meets the
41 requirements of section 20-2324.

42 ~~6.~~ 5. "COBRA continuation provision" means:

43 (a) Section 4980B, except subsection (f)(1) as it relates to
44 pediatric vaccines, of the internal revenue code of 1986.

1 (b) Title I, subtitle B, part 6, except section 609, of the
2 employee retirement income security act of 1974 (P.L. 93-406; 88 Stat.
3 829; 29 United States Code sections 1001 through 1461).

4 (c) Title XXII of the public health service act.

5 (d) ~~Any~~ SECTION 20-2330 OR A similar provision of the law of this
6 state or any other state.

7 ~~7.~~ 6. "Creditable coverage" means coverage solely for an
8 individual, other than limited benefits coverage, under any of the
9 following:

10 (a) An employee welfare benefit plan that provides medical care to
11 employees or the employees' dependents directly or through insurance or
12 reimbursement or otherwise pursuant to the employee retirement income
13 security act of 1974.

14 (b) A church plan as defined in the employee retirement income
15 security act of 1974.

16 (c) A health benefits plan issued by an accountable health plan as
17 defined in this section.

18 (d) Part A or part B of title XVIII of the social security act.

19 (e) Title XIX of the social security act, other than coverage
20 consisting solely of benefits under section 1928.

21 (f) Title 10, chapter 55 of the United States Code.

22 (g) A medical care program of the Indian health service or of a
23 tribal organization.

24 (h) A health benefits risk pool operated by any state of the United
25 States.

26 (i) A health plan offered pursuant to title 5, chapter 89 of the
27 United States Code.

28 (j) A public health plan as defined by federal law.

29 (k) A health benefit plan pursuant to section 5(e) of the peace
30 corps act (P.L. 87-293; 75 Stat. 612; 22 United States Code sections 2501
31 through 2523).

32 (l) A policy or contract, including short-term limited duration
33 insurance, issued on an individual basis by an insurer, a health care
34 services organization, a hospital service corporation, a medical service
35 corporation or a hospital, medical, dental and optometric service
36 corporation ~~or made available to persons defined as eligible under section~~
37 ~~36-2901, paragraph 6, subdivisions (b), (c), (d) and (e).~~

38 (m) A policy or contract issued by a health care insurer or an
39 accountable health plan to a member of a bona fide association.

40 ~~8.~~ 7. "Demographic characteristics" means objective factors an
41 insurer considers in determining premium rates. Demographic
42 characteristics do not include health status-related factors, industry or
43 duration of coverage since issue.

44 ~~9.~~ 8. "Different policy forms" means variations between policy
45 forms offered by a health care insurer, including policy forms that have
46 different cost sharing arrangements or different riders.

1 ~~10~~. 9. "Genetic information" means information about genes, gene
2 products and inherited characteristics that may derive from the individual
3 or a family member, including information regarding carrier status and
4 information derived from laboratory tests that identify mutations in
5 specific genes or chromosomes, physical medical examinations, family
6 histories and direct analyses of genes or chromosomes.

7 ~~11~~. 10. "Health benefits plan" means a hospital and medical service
8 corporation policy or certificate, a health care services organization
9 contract, a group disability policy, a certificate of insurance of a group
10 disability policy that is not issued in this state, a multiple employer
11 welfare arrangement or any other arrangement under which health services
12 or health benefits are provided to two or more individuals. Health
13 benefits plan does not include the following:

14 (a) Accident only, dental only, vision only, disability income only
15 or long-term care only insurance, fixed or hospital indemnity coverage,
16 limited benefit coverage, specified disease coverage, credit coverage or
17 Taft-Hartley trusts.

18 (b) Coverage that is issued as a supplement to liability insurance.

19 (c) Medicare supplemental insurance.

20 (d) Workers' compensation insurance.

21 (e) Automobile medical payment insurance.

22 ~~12~~. 11. "Health status-related factor" means any factor in relation
23 to the health of the individual or a dependent of the individual enrolled
24 or to be enrolled in an accountable health plan, including:

25 (a) Health status.

26 (b) Medical condition, including physical and mental illness.

27 (c) Claims experience.

28 (d) Receipt of health care.

29 (e) Medical history.

30 (f) Genetic information.

31 (g) Evidence of insurability, including conditions arising out of
32 acts of domestic violence as defined in section 20-448.

33 (h) The existence of a physical or mental disability.

34 ~~13~~. 12. "Higher level of coverage" means a health benefits plan
35 offered by an accountable health plan for which the actuarial value of the
36 benefits under the coverage is at least fifteen ~~per cent~~ PERCENT more than
37 the actuarial value of the health benefits plan offered by the accountable
38 health plan as a lower level of coverage in this state but not more than
39 one hundred twenty ~~per cent~~ PERCENT of a policy form weighted average.

40 ~~14~~. 13. "Index rate" means, as to a rating period, the arithmetic
41 average of the applicable base premium rate and the highest premium rate
42 that could have been charged under a rating system by the accountable
43 health plan to small employers for a health benefits plan involving the
44 same or similar coverage, family size and composition, and geographic
45 area.

1 ~~15.~~ 14. "Late enrollee" means an employee or dependent who requests
2 enrollment in a health benefits plan after the initial enrollment period
3 that is provided under the terms of the health benefits plan if the
4 initial enrollment period is at least thirty-one days. An employee or
5 dependent shall not be considered a late enrollee if:

6 (a) The person:

7 (i) At the time of the initial enrollment period was covered under
8 a public or private health insurance policy or any other health benefits
9 plan.

10 (ii) Lost coverage under a public or private health insurance
11 policy or any other health benefits plan due to the employee's termination
12 of employment or eligibility, the reduction in the number of hours of
13 employment, the termination of the other plan's coverage, the death of the
14 spouse, legal separation or divorce or the termination of employer
15 contributions toward the coverage.

16 (iii) Requests enrollment within thirty-one days after the
17 termination of creditable coverage that is provided under a public or
18 private health insurance or other health benefits plan.

19 (iv) Requests enrollment within thirty-one days after the date of
20 marriage.

21 (b) The person is employed by an employer that offers multiple
22 health benefits plans and the person elects a different plan during an
23 open enrollment period.

24 (c) A court orders that coverage be provided for a spouse or minor
25 child under a covered employee's health benefits plan and the person
26 requests enrollment within thirty-one days after the court order is
27 issued.

28 (d) The person becomes a dependent of a covered person through
29 marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption and requests
30 enrollment no later than thirty-one days after becoming a dependent.

31 ~~16.~~ 15. "Lower level of coverage" means a health benefits plan
32 offered by an accountable health plan for which the actuarial value of the
33 benefits under the health benefits plan is at least eighty-five ~~per cent~~
34 PERCENT but not more than one hundred ~~per cent~~ PERCENT of the policy form
35 weighted average.

36 ~~17.~~ 16. "Network plan" means a health benefits plan provided by an
37 accountable health plan under which the financing and delivery of health
38 benefits are provided, in whole or in part, through a defined set of
39 providers under contract with the accountable health plan in accordance
40 with the determination made by the director pursuant to section 20-1053
41 regarding the geographic or service area in which an accountable health
42 plan may operate.

43 ~~18.~~ 17. "Policy form weighted average" means the average actuarial
44 value of the benefits provided by all health benefits plans issued by
45 either the accountable health plan or, if the data are available, by all

1 accountable health plans in the group market in this state during the
2 previous calendar year, weighted by the enrollment for all coverage forms.
3 ~~19.~~ 18. "Preexisting condition" means a condition, regardless of
4 the cause of the condition, for which medical advice, diagnosis, care or
5 treatment was recommended or received within not more than six months
6 before the date of the enrollment of the individual under a health
7 benefits plan issued by an accountable health plan. A genetic condition
8 is not a preexisting condition in the absence of a diagnosis of the
9 condition related to the genetic information and shall not result in a
10 preexisting condition limitation or preexisting condition exclusion.

11 ~~20.~~ 19. "Preexisting condition limitation" or "preexisting
12 condition exclusion" means a limitation or exclusion of benefits for a
13 preexisting condition under a health benefits plan offered by an
14 accountable health plan.

15 ~~21.~~ 20. "Small employer" means an employer who employs at least two
16 but not more than fifty eligible employees on a typical business day
17 during any one calendar year. ~~As used in~~ FOR THE PURPOSES OF this
18 paragraph, "employee" ~~shall include~~ INCLUDES the employees of the employer
19 and the individual proprietor or self-employed person if the employer is
20 an individual proprietor or self-employed person.

21 ~~22.~~ 21. "Taft-Hartley trust" means a jointly-managed trust, as
22 allowed by 29 United States Code sections 141 through 187, that contains a
23 plan of benefits for employees and that is negotiated in a collective
24 bargaining agreement governing the wages, hours and working conditions of
25 the employees, as allowed by 29 United States Code section 157.

26 ~~23.~~ 22. "Waiting period" means the period that must pass before a
27 potential participant or beneficiary in a health benefits plan offered by
28 an accountable health plan is eligible to be covered for benefits as
29 determined by the individual's employer.

30 B. Coverage for a late enrollee begins on the date the person
31 becomes a dependent if a request for enrollment is received within
32 thirty-one days after the person becomes a dependent.

33 Sec. 10. Section 20-2311, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
34 read:

35 20-2311. Premium rates and rating practices

36 A. The premium rate that an accountable health plan charges during
37 a rating period for a health benefits plan issued to a small employer
38 shall not vary by more than sixty ~~percent~~ PERCENT from the index rate for
39 health benefits plans involving the same or similar coverage, family size
40 and composition, and geographic area.

41 B. In establishing premium rates for health benefits plans offered
42 to small employers:

43 1. An accountable health plan making adjustments with respect to
44 demographic characteristics shall apply those adjustments consistently
45 across all small employers.

1 2. An accountable health plan may not use a geographic area that is
2 smaller than a county or smaller than an area that includes all areas in
3 which the first three digits of the zip code are identical, whichever is
4 smaller.

5 C. The percentage increase in the premium rate that is charged to a
6 small employer for a new rating period may not exceed the sum of the
7 following:

8 1. The percentage change in the base premium rate.

9 2. Fifteen percentage points.

10 3. Any adjustment due to a change in coverage, family size or
11 composition, geographic area or demographic characteristics.

12 D. At the time an accountable health plan offers a health benefits
13 plan to a small employer, the accountable health plan shall fully disclose
14 to the employer all of the following:

15 1. Rating practices for small employer health benefits plans,
16 including rating practices for different populations and benefit designs.

17 2. The extent to which premium rates for the small employer are
18 established or adjusted based on the actual or expected variation in
19 claims costs or health condition of the employees of the small employer
20 and their dependents.

21 3. The accountable health plan's right to change premium rates, the
22 extent to which premiums can be modified and the factors that affect
23 changes in premium rates.

24 E. Each accountable health plan shall file annually with the
25 director a written statement by a member of the American academy of
26 actuaries or another individual acceptable to the director certifying that
27 based on an examination by the individual, including a review of the
28 appropriate records and of the actuarial assumptions of the accountable
29 health plan and methods used by the accountable health plan in
30 establishing base premium rates, index rates and premium rates for small
31 employer health benefits plans:

32 1. The accountable health plan is in compliance with the applicable
33 provisions of this article.

34 2. The rating methods are actuarially sound.

35 F. Each accountable health plan shall retain a copy of the
36 statement required by subsection E for examination at its principal place
37 of business.

38 G. Each accountable health plan shall annually file with the
39 director for informational purposes the accountable health plan's base
40 premium rates and index rates. On request, the director shall make the
41 base premium rates or the index rates available to the public for
42 inspection.

43 H. THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY IF A SMALL EMPLOYER OBTAINS A HEALTH
44 BENEFITS PLAN THAT IS SUBJECT TO AND COMPLIES WITH 42 UNITED STATES CODE
45 SECTION 300gg.

1 Sec. 11. Repeal
2 Sections 20-2318 and 20-2320, Arizona Revised Statutes, are
3 repealed.

4 Sec. 12. Section 20-2502, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
5 read:

6 20-2502. Utilization review activities; exemptions

7 A. A utilization review agent shall not conduct utilization review
8 in this state unless the utilization review agent meets or is exempt from
9 ~~the provisions of~~ this article.

10 B. A person is exempt from ~~the provisions of this article~~ SECTIONS
11 20-2504, 20-2505, 20-2506, 20-2507 AND 20-2508 AND SECTION 20-2509,
12 SUBSECTION A if the person:

13 1. Is accredited by the utilization review accreditation
14 commission, the national committee for quality assurance or any other
15 nationally recognized accreditation process recognized by the director.

16 2. Conducts internal utilization review for hospitals, home health
17 agencies, clinics, private offices or other health facilities or entities
18 if the review does not result in the approval or denial of payment for
19 hospital or medical services.

20 3. Conducts utilization review activities exclusively for work
21 related injuries and illnesses covered under the workers' compensation
22 laws in title 23.

23 4. Conducts utilization review activities exclusively for a
24 self-funded or self-insured employee benefit plan if the regulation of
25 that plan is preempted by section 514(b) of the employee retirement income
26 security act of 1974, ~~—~~ (29 United States Code section 1144(b)).

27 C. A utilization review agent shall conduct utilization review in
28 accordance with the agent's utilization review plan that is on file with
29 the department pursuant to section 20-2505 and in accordance with section
30 20-2532.

31 Sec. 13. Section 20-2531, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
32 read:

33 20-2531. Applicability; requirements; exception

34 A. Notwithstanding article 1 of this chapter and subject to
35 subsection B of this section, this article applies to all utilization
36 review decisions made by utilization review agents and health care
37 insurers operating in this state.

38 B. Each utilization review agent and each health care insurer
39 operating in this state whose utilization review system includes the power
40 to affect the direct or indirect denial of requested medical or health
41 care services or claims for medical or health care services shall adopt
42 written utilization review standards and criteria and processes for the
43 review, reconsideration and appeal of denials that do all of the
44 following:

45 1. Meet the requirements of this article.

46 2. Are consistent with chapter 1 of this title.

1 3. Comply with section 20-2505, paragraphs 2 through 6.

2 C. This article does not apply to utilization review:

3 1. Performed under contract with the federal government for
4 utilization review of patients eligible for all services under title XVIII
5 of the social security act.

6 2. Performed by a self-insured or self-funded employee benefit plan
7 or a multiemployer employee benefit plan created in accordance with and
8 pursuant to 29 United States Code section 186(c) if the regulation of that
9 plan is preempted by section 514(b) of the employee retirement income
10 security act of 1974 (29 United States Code section 1144(b)), but this
11 article does apply to a health care insurer that provides coverage for
12 services as part of an employee benefit plan.

13 3. Of work related injuries and illnesses covered under the
14 workers' compensation laws in title 23.

15 4. Performed under the terms of a policy that pays benefits based
16 on the health status of the insured and does not reimburse the cost of or
17 provide covered services.

18 5. Performed under the terms of a long-term care insurance policy
19 as defined in section 20-1691.

20 6. Performed under the terms of a medicare supplement policy as
21 defined by the department.

22 D. This article does not create any new private right or cause of
23 action for or on behalf of any member. This article provides only an
24 administrative process for a member to pursue an external independent
25 review of a denial for a covered service or claim for a covered service.

26 E. Utilization review activities involving retrospective claims
27 review ~~shall be~~ ARE limited to the provisions of this article only as
28 clearly and specifically provided in the provisions of this article.

29 F. THE PROCESSES AVAILABLE UNDER THIS ARTICLE DO NOT APPLY TO A
30 DENIAL OF A NONFORMULARY EXCEPTION REQUEST THAT WAS APPEALED PURSUANT TO
31 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS SECTION 156.122(c). A PROVIDER OR ENROLLEE
32 MAY APPEAL A DENIAL OF A NONFORMULARY EXCEPTION FOR A PLAN COVERED BY 45
33 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS SECTION 156.122(c) THROUGH THE PROCESS
34 PRESCRIBED IN THE FEDERAL RULE.

35 Sec. 14. Section 20-2532, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
36 read:

37 20-2532. Utilization review standards and criteria:
38 requirements

39 A. Each utilization review agent shall:

40 1. Adopt a written utilization review plan with standards and
41 criteria that apply to all utilization review decisions and that are
42 objective, clinically valid and compatible with established principles of
43 health care.

44 2. Establish the utilization review plan with input from physician
45 advisors who represent major medical specialties and who are certified or

1 board eligible under the standards of the appropriate American medical
2 specialty board.

3 3. Include in the adopted utilization review plan a process for
4 prompt initial reconsideration of an adverse decision and a process for
5 appeals that meet the requirements of this article. This paragraph does
6 not apply to utilization review activities limited to retrospective claims
7 review.

8 B. Deviations from the written standards and criteria in the
9 utilization review plan are ~~permitted~~ ALLOWED if the utilization review
10 agent determines that the member and other members with similar symptoms
11 and diagnoses would materially benefit from new treatments available
12 because of medical or technological advances made since the adoption of
13 the utilization review plan and made in accordance with accepted medical
14 standards. This subsection does not apply to utilization review
15 activities limited to retrospective claims review. Nothing in this
16 subsection creates a private right or cause of action against a health
17 care insurer or utilization review agent for failure to deviate from the
18 utilization review plan.

19 C. A health care insurer who ~~utilizes~~ USES the services of an
20 outside utilization review agent shall adopt a utilization review plan
21 pursuant to subsections A and B of this section. The utilization review
22 plan adopted and filed by the health care insurer who ~~utilizes~~ USES the
23 services of an outside utilization review agent is deemed adopted by that
24 utilization review agent.

25 D. A health care insurer who ~~utilizes~~ USES the services of an
26 outside utilization review agent is responsible for the utilization review
27 agent's acts that are within the scope of the written and filed
28 utilization review plan, including the administration of all patient
29 claims processed by the utilization review agent on behalf of the health
30 care insurer.

31 E. ~~Notwithstanding section 20-2502, subsection B,~~ Each utilization
32 review agent shall file a notice with the director that provides a
33 specific description and the published date of the source of the written
34 standards and criteria of the utilization review plan and that certifies
35 that the utilization review plan in use complies with the requirements of
36 this section, is available for review and inspection at a designated
37 location in this state or at an office accessible to authorized
38 representatives of the director in another state and is the complete
39 utilization review plan with all standards and criteria on which
40 utilization review decisions are based. A copy of any portion of the
41 utilization review plan on which any adverse decisions have been based
42 shall be made before the effective date of any modification and the
43 utilization review agent shall retain a copy at the designated location
44 for review and inspection for a period of five years after the date of the
45 modification. If at any time a complete change in the written standards

1 and criteria occurs, the utilization review agent shall file a new
2 certification notice with the director.

3 F. On or before March 1 of each year after the year in which the
4 utilization review agent filed the notice prescribed in subsection E of
5 this section, the utilization review agent or the agent's successor shall
6 submit a signed and notarized annual report to the director that includes
7 the designated location for review and inspection by the director or the
8 director's authorized representative and that certifies that:

9 1. The utilization review plan and all modifications remain in
10 compliance with the requirements of this section.

11 2. The utilization review agent will conduct all utilization
12 reviews in accordance with the plan.

13 3. All adverse decisions made in the prior year were based on the
14 plan in effect on the date of those decisions.

15 G. On written request, the utilization review agent shall provide
16 copies to any member or the member's treating provider of:

17 1. Those portions of the utilization review agent's utilization
18 review plan that are relevant to the request for a covered service or
19 claim for a covered service.

20 2. The protocols or guidelines that were used if the standards and
21 criteria adopted are based on protocols or guidelines developed by an
22 American medical specialty board.

23 H. Any person who requests records pursuant to subsection G of this
24 section shall direct the request to the utilization review agent and not
25 to the department.

26 I. If the utilization review plan is copyrighted by a person other
27 than the utilization review agent, the health care insurer shall make a
28 good faith effort to obtain permission from that person to make copies of
29 the relevant material. If the health care insurer is unable to secure
30 copyright permission, the utilization review agent shall provide a
31 detailed summary of the relevant portions of the utilization review plan.

32 J. Health care insurers having utilization review activities
33 limited to retrospective claims review shall be required to adopt only
34 those procedures and sources of review that are traditionally associated
35 with and necessary for retrospective claims review.