

## Medical professionals oppose SB 672

Medical professionals oppose SB 672, putting fee increases in code Senate bill 672, which is currently awaiting action by West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin, is being opposed by professional organizations and medical professionals. The bill puts several specific billing codes for behavioral health services provided by community mental health centers into statute.

The Bureau for Medical Services, the state Medicaid Office, has surveyed other Medicaid agencies and discovered at least 34 states, and none of the states contiguous to West Virginia, have billing codes listed in statute.

Of the 31 codes listed in the bill, 16 of them were increased on July 1, 2007.

### What medical professionals are saying about SB 672.

- The West Virginia State Medical Association has been a strong supporter of Mental Health Parity. Part of this effort is to ensure the full spectrum of mental is on par with physical health coverage. The legislature should increase Medicaid funding for behavioral health services and should do it this fiscal year, but to mandate that any increased funding only be directed to certain providers and certain billing codes is a misguided approach that we will not solve the problems we are facing. This approach may in turn actually create inequities within the system that cause a more rapid decline.

Stephen L. Seibert, M. D.  
President  
West Virginia State Medical Association

- ...The professional fee paid pharmacists by Medicaid is **grossly inadequate** because it does not cover the cost of dispensing a prescription and provide counseling to patients...Senate Bill 672 **is not good public policy** because it favors only one type of services.

Eric B. Belinda, R. Ph.  
President  
West Virginia Pharmacists Association

- The bill as is written does not correct what it has set out to do and **is not going to fix** the problems with the behavioral health system in the State of West Virginia. It works entirely against something that is already in the process and being worked on [by the] Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission....

Ahmed D. Faheem, M. D., Chariman  
West Virginia Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission

- Passage of Senate Bill 672 could have catastrophic consequences for West Virginia's community health networks by essentially dedicating all new Medicaid spending to a single area of coverage.

Philip A. Reale  
West Virginia Society of Oral and Maxiofacial Surgeons

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