

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 857
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State Affairs
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Enrolled

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, many managed care plans have two panels of doctors. One panel provides routine eye exams and the other panel handles medical problems, including medical eye problems. However, many medical eye problems can be treated by a therapeutic optometrist. If a patient with a medical eye condition goes to an eye doctor on the vision panel, unless the doctor is also on the medical panel, the doctor must refer the patient to a doctor who is on the medical panel for treatment. This requires the patient to go for a second office visit to a new doctor to begin treatment or pay for services. S.B. 857 allows a therapeutic optometrist who is on a managed care vision plan to join the managed care medical plan if the optometrist abides by certain conditions and provisions.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Article 21.52D, Insurance Code, by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (d), (e), and (f), as follows:

- (a) Defines “medical panel” and “vision panel” and creates Subdivision (3) from existing text.
- (d) Requires a managed care plan that provides or arranges for vision or medical eye care services or procedures to allow a therapeutic optometrist who is on one or more of the vision panels of the plan to be a fully participating provider on the plan’s medical panels to the full extent of the optometrist’s license to practice therapeutic optometry.
- (e) Requires a therapeutic optometrist who is included in a managed care plan’s medical panels under Subsection (d) to satisfy certain terms and conditions.
- (f) Authorizes a managed care plan that provides or arranges for vision or medical eye care services or procedures to charge a participating therapeutic optometrist certain fees.

SECTION 2. (a) Effective date: September 1, 2003.

- (b) Makes application of this Act prospective to January 1, 2004, in relation to a managed care policy, contract, or evidence of coverage.
- (c) Makes application of this act prospective in relation to a contract between a managed care plan and a therapeutic optometrist.