

By: Shapleigh

S.B. No. 494

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to information provided by certain health benefit plans through the Internet.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter E, Chapter 21, Insurance Code, is amended by adding Article 21.71A to read as follows:

Art. 21.71A. HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN INTERNET SITE. (a) This article applies to:

(1) a health maintenance organization; and

(2) an insurer, a group hospital service corporation, a fraternal benefit society, a stipulated premium insurer, a reciprocal or interinsurance exchange, a multiple employer welfare arrangement that holds a certificate of authority under Chapter 846, and an approved nonprofit health corporation, that offers or administers:

(A) a preferred provider plan, as defined by Article 3.70-3C of this code, as added by Chapter 1024, Acts of the 75th Legislature, Regular Session, 1997;

(B) a point-of-service plan, as described by Article 26.09 of this code; or

(C) any other health benefit plan in which enrollees are required to obtain health care services from specified physicians or providers or receive a financial incentive to obtain health care services from specified physicians or

1 providers.

2 (b) An entity subject to this article shall maintain an
3 Internet site on which the entity lists physicians and providers,
4 including mental health providers and substance abuse treatment
5 providers, if appropriate, that may be used by enrollees in
6 accordance with the terms of the plan in which the enrollee is
7 enrolled. The listing must identify those physicians and providers
8 who continue to be available to provide services to new patients or
9 clients.

10 (c) An entity subject to this article shall update at least
11 quarterly the Internet site required by this article.

12 (d) The commissioner may adopt rules as necessary to
13 implement this article. The rules may govern the form and content
14 of the Internet site required by this article.

15 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

16 SECTION 3. An entity subject to Article 21.71A, Insurance
17 Code, as added by this Act, is not required to initially provide the
18 Internet site required by this Act before January 1, 2004.