

ACT 238

S.B. NO. 2908

A Bill for an Act Relating to Hawaii Qualified Health Centers.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that community health centers play an important role in serving many of Hawaii's most medically disadvantaged. Many of those who use community health centers are uninsured and have or will have their health care financed by government programs such as QUEST, Medicaid, SHIP, and Medicare, or through chapter 42D, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

These not-for-profit community health centers are strong patient advocates and are governed by community-based boards. Community health centers have traditionally offered translation services, outreach, and preventive primary care services that are culturally sensitive. The legislature further finds that movement into managed care systems should not unintentionally result in a decrease of primary care services, outreach, or other enabling services, especially for those who are less likely to receive health services through a health insurance system.

Furthermore, the amendments to QUEST allow for many enabling services to be optional. Hence, community-based outreach is essential in controlling health care costs to this population.

The purpose of this Act is to designate Hawaii qualified health centers (HQHCs) and to assure cost-based reimbursements for HQHCs for the delivery of enabling services such as outreach and necessary translation and cultural services.

SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§321- Additional duties of the director. Any health center previously designated as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), FQHC look alike, or Rural Health Clinic (RHC) shall have comparable designation as a Hawaii Qualified Health Center and shall also be known as Essential Community Providers. The director of health, with the concurrence of the director of human services, shall have the authority to designate other Hawaii health centers not yet federally designated but deserving of support to meet short term public health needs based on the department of health’s criteria, as Hawaii Qualified Health Centers.”

SECTION 3. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§346- Hawaii qualified health centers. If the QUEST program is implemented, the department shall provide a supplemental capitation program for the uninsured with enabling services based on an annual cost-based determination to all Hawaii qualified health centers (HQHCs) and to any nonprofit entity having a majority of HQHCs as board members.

For the purposes of this section, “enabling services” includes enabling services as defined by federally qualified health center standards. The department shall have the administrative flexibility to expend funds through QUEST contracts, through a modified voucher system, or through chapter 42D. HQHCs receiving these supplemental payments shall reconcile their costs on an annual basis.”

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 22, 1994.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.