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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/28/13

SPONSOR Beffort LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line SB 177

ANALYST Esquibel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY13	FY14		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Board of Nursing (BN)

Human Services Department (HSD)

Department of Health (DOH)

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 177 (SB177) appropriates \$250 thousand in general fund revenue in FY14 to the DOH to fund a nurse advice telephone hotline that provides nurse triage services 24 hours a day to reduce emergency room and hospital costs for uninsured individuals in the state.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250 thousand contained in SB177 is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY14 shall revert to the general fund.

The DOH indicates it would request authority to use a minimum of 5 percent of the amount appropriated for the department's administrative overhead costs associated with implementing the appropriation.

The HSD indicates the DOH has maintained a 24-hour nurse advice line since 2005. Currently, 3 out of 7 Medicaid managed care organizations contract with the DOH nurse advice line to provide this 24-hour/7-day a week service and report all encounters back to the insurance companies for follow up.

Under HSD's Centennial Care, Medicaid managed care organizations are required to staff a 24-hour per day, 7-day a week member service line that will be able to triage urgent and emergency calls from members. They can meet this requirement by having a separate nurse triage/nurse advice line. Centennial Care has specific requirements about how this nurse triage/nurse advice line should be staffed.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The BN indicates the bill might assist in reducing the overall death rate secondary to the misuse or abuse of opiate drugs.

The DOH indicates Nurse Advice New Mexico (NANM) is staffed by registered nurses (RN) who provide medical, behavioral, social service and emergency needs, as well as health information to callers. Any person in New Mexico, regardless of insurance status, can call the line.

According to a 2008 assessment of NANM, more than a majority of those who use the line are following the recommendations made by NANM, which translates to the following benefits:

- patients accessing NANM are receiving needed care at the most appropriate level per consistent evidenced-based clinical protocols;
- increased direct cost savings to the healthcare delivery systems in the state in terms of more nurse hours available for patient care rather than phone care, physician retention due to 24/7 relief, and appropriate rather than inappropriate level of care costs;
- increased indirect cost savings to health care providers and institutions regarding reduced liability, since without the use of consistent and evidence-based triage protocols, they could increase their risks;
- increased indirect cost savings in terms of consumer satisfaction, not only with NANM, but with more nurse hours available for patient care in their doctors' offices and hospitals; and
- increased consumer knowledge and confidence in their self-care abilities, since they have 24/7 access to a registered nurse.

(Source: Assessment of Nurse Advice New Mexico, efficacy, impact, and cost/benefit within the client catchment area of Gila Regional Medical Center, August 2008)

RAE/bm