

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the Legislature. LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

<b>SPONSOR</b> <u>O'Neill</u>	<b>LAST UPDATED</b> _____
	<b>ORIGINAL DATE</b> <u>2/28/23</u>
<b>SHORT TITLE</b> <u>Study Acupuncture for Neurological Issues</u>	<b>BILL NUMBER</b> <u>Senate Memorial 52</u>
	<b>ANALYST</b> <u>Klundt</u>

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\* (dollars in thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$20.5	\$20.5		\$41.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund
<b>Total</b>						

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.  
 \*Amounts reflect most recent version of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

Responses Received From  
 Department of Health (DOH)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Memorial 52

Senate Memorial 52 (SM52) requests that the University of New Mexico (UNM) Brain and Behavioral Health Institute, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Neuro-Acupuncture Institute (NAI) in Santa Fe jointly study the health effects and effectiveness of acupuncture and neuro-acupuncture in the treatment of a variety of neurological disorders, including strokes, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (known as Lou Gehrig’s disease), multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury (TBI), autism spectrum disorders, and Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s diseases.

The memorial would seek “ways to provide opportunities for clinical demonstrations and techniques where functional magnetic resonance imaging technology is used to assess before and after results and impacts on patients receiving neuro-acupuncture treatment for the diseases cited.” The memorial requests that a report on findings and conclusions from this joint research effort be presented to the interim legislative health and human services committee by October 1, 2023.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SM52 does not contained an appropriation. DOH reported a two-year operating budget impact of

\$20.5 thousand for staff support to carry out the activities in SM52. DOH also stated, “Given the short timeframe for this memorial (with a report out by October 2023) it is estimated that a coordinator would need to work (part-time) with UNM and the Neuro-Acupuncture Institute for the next six months at an estimated cost of \$40,907 to DOH.”

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH reports this memorial could support increased understanding and availability of evidence-based practices to improve care and quality of life for New Mexicans with a variety of neurological disorders. No similar bill has been identified, although several healthcare workforce-related bills relate to acupuncture and its practitioners.

In addition to the national-level data cited in the memorial, in New Mexico there were over 16 thousand emergency department (ED) visits for TBI from 2018-2020 and over 9,700 (ED) visits for stroke during the same three-year period.

Acupuncture has been studied and under certain conditions found effective for use in patients experiencing pain, both chronic and postoperative, and can reduce the use of opioid analgesics.

Some recent studies suggest acupuncture may have positive effects as a supplementary medical treatment alongside standard care for some neurological diseases, but researchers note the evidence base is stronger for Alzheimer’s than for Parkinson’s. Limitations of research studies often include the small number of patients studied and variation in the ways acupuncture is practiced.

Neuro-acupuncture is described by the Neuro-Acupuncture Institute (NAI) on their website as contemporary acupuncture technique integrating traditional Chinese needling methods and Scalp Acupuncture with western medical knowledge of neurology, neuroscience, and neurological rehabilitation” although this is not the definition which is provided in the memorial, “advanced acupuncture techniques developed in New Mexico, ..., [which] merge eastern acupuncture with western neurology and can provide improvement for many neurological ailments.

This memorial seeks to build the evidence base for neuro-acupuncture, as practiced by NAI, using the resources of UNM’s Brain and Behavioral Health Institute. The role of the DOH is not well-defined in the memorial as currently written.

KK/al/hg