

March 14, 2001

S 451. PHARMACISTS' PATIENT DRUG CARE ACT. TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE AMONG ALL PHARMACIES FOR PATIENTS OFFERED OUTPATIENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS BY HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS IN NORTH CAROLINA AND TO PROVIDE A CONSISTENTLY FAIR AND EQUITABLE MEANS OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR ALL PHARMACIES BY THESE PLANS. Enacts new GS 58-3-179 requiring insurers, third-party administrators, and other entities providing health benefit plans to provide access to and freedom of choice among all registered pharmacies for outpatient prescription drug benefits offered to insured beneficiaries covered by these plans. Also applies to any plan (other than an outpatient prescription drug program administered by DHHS) administered by the state with federal or state funds to the extent allowed by federal law. Insured beneficiary is responsible for paying a noncontracting pharmacy the difference, if any, between the amount paid by the plan and the charge established by the noncontracting pharmacy. Noncontracting pharmacies must be reimbursed by plans in same manner, to same extent, at same rate, and on same payment schedule as pharmacies that are parties to a pharmacy provider contract. Violation of section is subject to GS 58-2-70 (civil penalties). Makes conforming amendment to GS 135-40.5(g) (teachers and state employees major medical plan). Applies to outpatient prescription drug benefits process on or after July 1, 2001.

Intro. by Rand.

Ref. to Commerce	GS 58, 135
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