

March 11, 2009

H 535. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE/LYMPHEDEMA. Filed 3/11/09. *TO REQUIRE HEALTH INSURERS, INCLUDING THE STATE HEALTH PLAN, TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF LYMPHEDEMA.*

Enacts new GS 58-3-280 to establish that every health benefit plan, as defined in GS 58-3-167, must provide coverage for the diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment of lymphedema. Requires benefits for equipment, supplies, complex decongestive therapy, gradient compression garments, and outpatient self-management training and education, if the treatment is determined to be medically necessary and is provided by a health care professional approved and licensed or certified by the state to provide diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment for lymphedema. Provides that the same deductibles, coinsurance, and other limitations as apply to similar services must apply to the coverage of lymphedema. Specifies that *gradient compression garments* (1) require a prescription, (2) are custom-fit for the covered individual, and (3) do not include disposable medical supplies such as over-the-counter compression or elastic knee-high or other stocking products.

Amends GS 90-270.26 and GS 90-270.69 to add to the powers and duties of the North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners and the North Carolina Board of Occupational Therapy, respectively, that mechanisms be established for assessing the training and competence of practitioners in performing lymphedema treatment.

Effective for all health benefit plans delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed on and after January 1, 2010.

Intro. by Cotham.

GS 58, 90

May 5, 2009

H 535. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE/LYMPHEDEMA. Filed 3/11/09. House committee substitute makes the following changes to 1st edition. Amends the language mandating health insurance coverage for lymphedema in new GS 58-3-280. Revised language clarifies that in order to be included within the mandate, the treatment must be provided by (1) a licensed occupational or physical therapist, (2) a licensed nurse that has experience providing the treatment, or (3) another licensed health care professional whose scope of practice includes treatment of lymphedema. Extends the insurance mandate to all self-management training and education (was, limited to outpatient training). Clarifies that the legislation does not require insurers to establish a separate set of benefit limitations or maximums related to lymphedema. Amends GS 135-45 to require the State Health Plan to provide coverage for lymphedema consistent with the new mandate. Deletes provision that would have amended GS 90-270.26 and GS 90-270.69 to require the licensing boards for physical and occupational therapists to evaluate applicants' competence for treating lymphedema.

July 20, 2009

SL 2009-313 (H 535). HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE/LYMPHEDEMA. AN ACT TO REQUIRE HEALTH INSURERS, INCLUDING THE STATE HEALTH PLAN, TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF LYMPHEDEMA. Summarized in *Daily Bulletin* 3/11/09 and 5/5/09. Enacted July 17, 2009. Effective January 1, 2010.