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| **SPRING 2020 Newsletter****Legislative and Regulatory Outcomes from the 2020 Legislative Session**Thanks to the ARNPs United Legislative Committee, our hardworking chair, Louise Kaplan, and relentless lobbyist, Devon Connor-Green for their input and evaluation on the dozens of bills reviewed this session. Several bills that successfully passed both houses were recently vetoed by Governor Inslee to protect the budget and offset anticipated costs associated with COVID-19 expenses and loss of income, including a proposed rate increase on Medicaid reimbursement. Here are the session highlights:**HB  1433/SB 5647**The legislation promoted by ARNPs United requiring third party insurers to reimburse ARNPs equally for equal service did not get a hearing. House Health and Wellness Chair Eileen Cody, continues to oppose our bill, fearing an increase an insurance rates and citing physician’s longer education. ARNPs United planned an aggressive push over the summer to assure a hearing in the 2021 session, potentially with the Senate. However, all plans are being reassessed as a consequence of social isolating. The Legislative Committee will meet in April to strategize a new plan.**SB 5385** requires parity reimbursement for visits performed via telehealth services compared to face-to-face services.**SB 6061** requires all but physicians to complete mandatory training of an unspecified length and content to perform telehealth visits. ARNPs United anticipates opposing and revising this in the coming legislative session.**SB 6087**limits out-of-pocket expenses for a 30-day supply of insulin to be capped at $100. The State Health Care Authority (HCA) is directed to monitor price of insulin.**SB 6492** eliminates the workforce education investment surcharge and replaces it with an increase to the Business and Occupation service rate from 1.5 to 1.75 percent. This will apply to businesses earning more than $1 million annually in the preceding calendar year. ARNPs United will monitor and work with other stakeholders in 2021 on revisions.**HB 2642** removes health coverage barriers to accessing Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment services**SB 6404** requires health plans to report to the Office of the Insurance Commissioner regarding services subject to prior authorization. The bill creates a prior authorization workgroup via the Health Care Authority or Bree Collaborative.**HB 2409** concerns Worker’s Compensation and includes a fine for ARNPs and other providers who fail to meet expected reporting requirements when caring for injured workers. ARNPs United was able to reduce the fine from $800 to $500.The great news on **Home Health Ordering:*** WA State Health Care Authority (HCA) as of April 3, 2020 changed administrative codes **in accordance with the federal CARES Act (section 3708)**to **allow ARNPs and PAs to order home health services for Medicare. NO physician signature needed!  This change will be permanent. The Washington Health Care Authority is reviewing State rules to assure that NPs and CNSs can order home health and supplies for Medicaid patients.**
* Find full text of WA State Emergency rule here: [https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/103E-20-09-016.pdf](https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hca.wa.gov%2Fassets%2F103E-20-09-016.pdf&data=02%7C01%7C%7Ce672d852be814a6202c508d7db6a22ca%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637219121198807785&sdata=BVQd89tHI27HfCg5FsvBDUQEbhQsZCGUJfSojRMiPBc%3D&reserved=0)
* Find full text of CARES Act here: [https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/748/text](https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.congress.gov%2Fbill%2F116th-congress%2Fhouse-bill%2F748%2Ftext&data=02%7C01%7C%7Ce672d852be814a6202c508d7db6a22ca%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637219121198817789&sdata=xnG2azF8y9rq3DYzIM4S%2Fr2Eup9w0se9W3wB9LCVCv4%3D&reserved=0)

Among the several bills that passed through both houses but vetoed by the governor because of the economic impact anticipated by the COVID-19 pandemic:* SB 6128 Extending coverage during the postpartum period from 60 days to 12 months
* From the Supplemental operating budget the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) rate increase
* **HB 1552**requires health carriers to reimburse a health care provider for covered health care services provided to the carrier's enrollees during the credentialing process under certain circumstances.
* Reach out and Read funding

Finally, on April 15 the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission voted to approve changes in ARNP license renewal to eliminate a clinical practice requirement. ARNPs are advised to closely monitor the renewal requirements of their certifying body to confirm you are in compliance with national requirements which may include clinical practice hours.  |

**Member Profile: Cari Cowin**

Cari Cowin MSN ARNP is currently co-owner/operator of Yakima Worker Care Pllc. This Nurse Practitioner and women led clinic offers occupational services to central WA by providing DOT exams and care for workplace injuries. She also provides primary care to at risk students at Fort Simcoe Job Corp, supporting their physical and mental health while they learn a vocation.   She graduated from Gonzaga University in 2009 with her Master's in the Science of Nursing. She is a treasurer of Yakima Valley Nurse Practitioner Association as well as Board member for local Scout troop 251. She has also been a clinical instructor at Washington State School of Nursing for baccalaureate students. In her free time she enjoys hiking, skiing and paddle boarding as well as spending time with her 5 children.

Yakima Worker Care Clinic: <http://www.workercareclinic.com>

Yakima Valley Nurse Practitioners Association:

https://www.facebook.com/yvnpa

**Layoffs and Furloughs during COVID**

One unexpected consequence of the COVID pandemic and the Washington stay at home orders was how quickly many health care workers were laid off or saw their hours cut. There do not appear to be available statistics for nurse practitioners in Washington State, but a recent [Seattle Times](https://www.seattletimes.com/business/doctors-practices-are-hurt-by-coronavirus-pandemic-just-when-theyre-most-needed/) article discussed some of the dire consequences tracked by the Washington State Medical Association on physician practices. The AANP has a form to help identify the COVID needs in your community, please fill it out so we can better understand how COVID is affecting you and your community. <https://www.aanp.org/covid19-needs>