SB0241

LRB10327273BMS53644b

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

SB0241

Introduced 1/31/2023, by Sen. Laura Ellman

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

215 ILCS 5/356z.3
215 ILCS 5/356z.3a
215 ILCS 124/10

Amends the Illinois Insurance Code. Makes a change in provisions concerning disclosure of nonparticipating provider limited benefits. Adds reproductive health care to the definition of "ancillary services". Amends the Network Adequacy and Transparency Act. Provides that an insurer providing a network plan shall file a description with the Director of Insurance of written policies and procedures on how the network plan will provide 24-hour, 7-day per week access to reproductive health care. Provides that the Department of Insurance shall consider establishing ratios for reproductive health care physicians or other providers. Effective July 1, 2024, except that certain changes take effect January 1, 2025.

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A BILL FOR

AN ACT concerning regulation.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Illinois Insurance Code is amended by changing Sections 356z.3 and 356z.3a as follows:

(215 ILCS 5/356z.3)

Sec. 356z.3. Disclosure of limited benefit. An insurer that issues, delivers, amends, or renews an individual or group policy of accident and health insurance in this State after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 92nd General Assembly and arranges, contracts with, or administers contracts with a provider whereby beneficiaries are provided an incentive to use the services of such provider must include the following disclosure on its contracts and evidences of coverage: "WARNING, LIMITED BENEFITS WILL BE PAID WHEN NON-PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS ARE USED. You should be aware that when you elect to utilize the services of a non-participating provider for a covered service in non-emergency situations, benefit payments to such non-participating provider are not based upon the amount billed. The basis of your benefit payment will be determined according to your policy's fee schedule, usual and customary charge (which is determined by comparing charges for similar services adjusted to the

geographical area where the services are performed), or other method as defined by the policy. YOU CAN EXPECT TO PAY MORE THAN THE COINSURANCE AMOUNT DEFINED IN THE POLICY AFTER THE PLAN HAS PAID ITS REQUIRED PORTION. Non-participating providers may bill members for any amount up to the billed charge after the plan has paid its portion of the bill, except as provided in Section 356z.3a of the Illinois Insurance Code for covered services received at a participating health care facility from a nonparticipating provider that are: (a) ancillary services, (b) items or services furnished as a result of unforeseen, urgent medical needs that arise at the time the item or service is furnished, ~~or~~ (c) items or services received when the facility or the non-participating provider fails to satisfy the notice and consent criteria specified under Section 356z.3a, or (d) reproductive health care, as defined in Section 1-10 of the Reproductive Health Act. Participating providers have agreed to accept discounted payments for services with no additional billing to the member other than co-insurance and deductible amounts. You may obtain further information about the participating status of professional providers and information on out-of-pocket expenses by calling the toll free telephone number on your identification card.".

(Source: P.A. 102-901, eff. 1-1-23.)

(215 ILCS 5/356z.3a)

Sec. 356z.3a. Billing; emergency services; nonparticipating providers.

(a) As used in this Section:

"Ancillary services" means:

(1) items and services related to emergency medicine, anesthesiology, pathology, radiology, and neonatology that are provided by any health care provider;

(2) items and services provided by assistant surgeons, hospitalists, and intensivists;

(3) diagnostic services, including radiology and laboratory services, except for advanced diagnostic laboratory tests identified on the most current list published by the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. 300gg-132(b)(3);

(4) items and services provided by other specialty practitioners as the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services specifies through rulemaking under 42 U.S.C. 300gg-132(b)(3);

(5) items and services provided by a nonparticipating provider if there is no participating provider who can furnish the item or service at the facility; ~~and~~

(6) items and services provided by a nonparticipating provider if there is no participating provider who will furnish the item or service because a participating provider has asserted the participating provider's rights under the Health Care Right of Conscience Act; and~~.~~

(7) reproductive health care, as defined in Section 1-10 of the Reproductive Health Act.

"Cost sharing" means the amount an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee is responsible for paying for a covered item or service under the terms of the policy or certificate. "Cost sharing" includes copayments, coinsurance, and amounts paid toward deductibles, but does not include amounts paid towards premiums, balance billing by out-of-network providers, or the cost of items or services that are not covered under the policy or certificate.

"Emergency department of a hospital" means any hospital department that provides emergency services, including a hospital outpatient department.

"Emergency medical condition" has the meaning ascribed to that term in Section 10 of the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act.

"Emergency medical screening examination" has the meaning ascribed to that term in Section 10 of the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act.

"Emergency services" means, with respect to an emergency medical condition:

(1) in general, an emergency medical screening examination, including ancillary services routinely available to the emergency department to evaluate such emergency medical condition, and such further medical examination and treatment as would be required to

stabilize the patient regardless of the department of the hospital or other facility in which such further examination or treatment is furnished; or

(2) additional items and services for which benefits are provided or covered under the coverage and that are furnished by a nonparticipating provider or nonparticipating emergency facility regardless of the department of the hospital or other facility in which such items are furnished after the insured, beneficiary, or enrollee is stabilized and as part of outpatient observation or an inpatient or outpatient stay with respect to the visit in which the services described in paragraph (1) are furnished. Services after stabilization cease to be emergency services only when all the conditions of 42 U.S.C. 300gg-111(a)(3)(C)(ii)(II) and regulations thereunder are met.

"Freestanding Emergency Center" means a facility licensed under Section 32.5 of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems Act.

"Health care facility" means, in the context of non-emergency services, any of the following:

(1) a hospital as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1395x(e);

(2) a hospital outpatient department;

(3) a critical access hospital certified under 42 U.S.C. 1395i-4(e);

(4) an ambulatory surgical treatment center as defined

in the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center Act; or

(5) any recipient of a license under the Hospital Licensing Act that is not otherwise described in this definition.

"Health care provider" means a provider as defined in subsection (d) of Section 370g. "Health care provider" does not include a provider of air ambulance or ground ambulance services.

"Health care services" has the meaning ascribed to that term in subsection (a) of Section 370g.

"Health insurance issuer" has the meaning ascribed to that term in Section 5 of the Illinois Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

"Nonparticipating emergency facility" means, with respect to the furnishing of an item or service under a policy of group or individual health insurance coverage, any of the following facilities that does not have a contractual relationship directly or indirectly with a health insurance issuer in relation to the coverage:

(1) an emergency department of a hospital;

(2) a Freestanding Emergency Center;

(3) an ambulatory surgical treatment center as defined in the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center Act; or

(4) with respect to emergency services described in paragraph (2) of the definition of "emergency services", a hospital.

"Nonparticipating provider" means, with respect to the furnishing of an item or service under a policy of group or individual health insurance coverage, any health care provider who does not have a contractual relationship directly or indirectly with a health insurance issuer in relation to the coverage.

"Participating emergency facility" means any of the following facilities that has a contractual relationship directly or indirectly with a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage setting forth the terms and conditions on which a relevant health care service is provided to an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee under the coverage:

(1) an emergency department of a hospital;

(2) a Freestanding Emergency Center;

(3) an ambulatory surgical treatment center as defined in the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center Act; or

(4) with respect to emergency services described in paragraph (2) of the definition of "emergency services", a hospital.

For purposes of this definition, a single case agreement between an emergency facility and an issuer that is used to address unique situations in which an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee requires services that typically occur out-of-network constitutes a contractual relationship and is limited to the parties to the agreement.

"Participating health care facility" means any health care facility that has a contractual relationship directly or indirectly with a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage setting forth the terms and conditions on which a relevant health care service is provided to an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee under the coverage. A single case agreement between an emergency facility and an issuer that is used to address unique situations in which an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee requires services that typically occur out-of-network constitutes a contractual relationship for purposes of this definition and is limited to the parties to the agreement.

"Participating provider" means any health care provider that has a contractual relationship directly or indirectly with a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage setting forth the terms and conditions on which a relevant health care service is provided to an insured, beneficiary, or enrollee under the coverage.

"Qualifying payment amount" has the meaning given to that term in 42 U.S.C. 300gg-111(a)(3)(E) and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

"Recognized amount" means the lesser of the amount initially billed by the provider or the qualifying payment amount.

"Stabilize" means "stabilization" as defined in Section 10 of the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act.

"Treating provider" means a health care provider who has evaluated the individual.

"Visit" means, with respect to health care services furnished to an individual at a health care facility, health care services furnished by a provider at the facility, as well as equipment, devices, telehealth services, imaging services, laboratory services, and preoperative and postoperative services regardless of whether the provider furnishing such services is at the facility.

(b) Emergency services. When a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee receives emergency services from a nonparticipating provider or a nonparticipating emergency facility, the health insurance issuer shall ensure that the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee shall incur no greater out-of-pocket costs than the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee would have incurred with a participating provider or a participating emergency facility. Any cost-sharing requirements shall be applied as though the emergency services had been received from a participating provider or a participating facility. Cost sharing shall be calculated based on the recognized amount for the emergency services. If the cost sharing for the same item or service furnished by a participating provider would have been a flat-dollar copayment, that amount shall be the cost-sharing amount unless the provider has billed a lesser total amount. In no event shall the beneficiary, insured, enrollee, or any group policyholder or plan sponsor be liable

to or billed by the health insurance issuer, the nonparticipating provider, or the nonparticipating emergency facility for any amount beyond the cost sharing calculated in accordance with this subsection with respect to the emergency services delivered. Administrative requirements or limitations shall be no greater than those applicable to emergency services received from a participating provider or a participating emergency facility.

(b-5) Non-emergency services at participating health care facilities.

(1) When a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee utilizes a participating health care facility and, due to any reason, covered ancillary services are provided by a nonparticipating provider during or resulting from the visit, the health insurance issuer shall ensure that the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee shall incur no greater out-of-pocket costs than the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee would have incurred with a participating provider for the ancillary services. Any cost-sharing requirements shall be applied as though the ancillary services had been received from a participating provider. Cost sharing shall be calculated based on the recognized amount for the ancillary services. If the cost sharing for the same item or service furnished by a participating provider would have been a flat-dollar copayment, that amount shall be the cost-sharing amount unless the provider has billed a

lesser total amount. In no event shall the beneficiary, insured, enrollee, or any group policyholder or plan sponsor be liable to or billed by the health insurance issuer, the nonparticipating provider, or the participating health care facility for any amount beyond the cost sharing calculated in accordance with this subsection with respect to the ancillary services delivered. In addition to ancillary services, the requirements of this paragraph shall also apply with respect to covered items or services furnished as a result of unforeseen, urgent medical needs that arise at the time an item or service is furnished, regardless of whether the nonparticipating provider satisfied the notice and consent criteria under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) When a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee utilizes a participating health care facility and receives non-emergency covered health care services other than those described in paragraph (1) of this subsection from a nonparticipating provider during or resulting from the visit, the health insurance issuer shall ensure that the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee incurs no greater out-of-pocket costs than the beneficiary, insured, or enrollee would have incurred with a participating provider unless the nonparticipating provider or the participating health care facility on behalf of the nonparticipating provider satisfies the notice and consent criteria

provided in 42 U.S.C. 300gg-132 and regulations promulgated thereunder. If the notice and consent criteria are not satisfied, then:

(A) any cost-sharing requirements shall be applied as though the health care services had been received from a participating provider;

(B) cost sharing shall be calculated based on the recognized amount for the health care services; and

(C) in no event shall the beneficiary, insured, enrollee, or any group policyholder or plan sponsor be liable to or billed by the health insurance issuer, the nonparticipating provider, or the participating health care facility for any amount beyond the cost sharing calculated in accordance with this subsection with respect to the health care services delivered.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code, except when the notice and consent criteria are satisfied for the situation in paragraph (2) of subsection (b-5), any benefits a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee receives for services under the situations in subsection (b) or (b-5) are assigned to the nonparticipating providers or the facility acting on their behalf. Upon receipt of the provider's bill or facility's bill, the health insurance issuer shall provide the nonparticipating provider or the facility with a written explanation of benefits that specifies the proposed reimbursement and the applicable deductible, copayment, or

coinsurance amounts owed by the insured, beneficiary, or enrollee. The health insurance issuer shall pay any reimbursement subject to this Section directly to the nonparticipating provider or the facility.

(d) For bills assigned under subsection (c), the nonparticipating provider or the facility may bill the health insurance issuer for the services rendered, and the health insurance issuer may pay the billed amount or attempt to negotiate reimbursement with the nonparticipating provider or the facility. Within 30 calendar days after the provider or facility transmits the bill to the health insurance issuer, the issuer shall send an initial payment or notice of denial of payment with the written explanation of benefits to the provider or facility. If attempts to negotiate reimbursement for services provided by a nonparticipating provider do not result in a resolution of the payment dispute within 30 days after receipt of written explanation of benefits by the health insurance issuer, then the health insurance issuer or nonparticipating provider or the facility may initiate binding arbitration to determine payment for services provided on a per-bill basis. The party requesting arbitration shall notify the other party arbitration has been initiated and state its final offer before arbitration. In response to this notice, the nonrequesting party shall inform the requesting party of its final offer before the arbitration occurs. Arbitration shall be initiated by filing a request with the Department of

Insurance.

(e) The Department of Insurance shall publish a list of approved arbitrators or entities that shall provide binding arbitration. These arbitrators shall be American Arbitration Association or American Health Lawyers Association trained arbitrators. Both parties must agree on an arbitrator from the Department of Insurance's or its approved entity's list of arbitrators. If no agreement can be reached, then a list of 5 arbitrators shall be provided by the Department of Insurance or the approved entity. From the list of 5 arbitrators, the health insurance issuer can veto 2 arbitrators and the provider or facility can veto 2 arbitrators. The remaining arbitrator shall be the chosen arbitrator. This arbitration shall consist of a review of the written submissions by both parties. The arbitrator shall not establish a rebuttable presumption that the qualifying payment amount should be the total amount owed to the provider or facility by the combination of the issuer and the insured, beneficiary, or enrollee. Binding arbitration shall provide for a written decision within 45 days after the request is filed with the Department of Insurance. Both parties shall be bound by the arbitrator's decision. The arbitrator's expenses and fees, together with other expenses, not including attorney's fees, incurred in the conduct of the arbitration, shall be paid as provided in the decision.

(f) (Blank).

(g) Section 368a of this Act shall not apply during the pendency of a decision under subsection (d). Upon the issuance of the arbitrator's decision, Section 368a applies with respect to the amount, if any, by which the arbitrator's determination exceeds the issuer's initial payment under subsection (c), or the entire amount of the arbitrator's determination if initial payment was denied. Any interest required to be paid to a provider under Section 368a shall not accrue until after 30 days of an arbitrator's decision as provided in subsection (d), but in no circumstances longer than 150 days from the date the nonparticipating facility-based provider billed for services rendered.

(h) Nothing in this Section shall be interpreted to change the prudent layperson provisions with respect to emergency services under the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act.

(i) Nothing in this Section shall preclude a health care provider from billing a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee for reasonable administrative fees, such as service fees for checks returned for nonsufficient funds and missed appointments.

(j) Nothing in this Section shall preclude a beneficiary, insured, or enrollee from assigning benefits to a nonparticipating provider when the notice and consent criteria are satisfied under paragraph (2) of subsection (b-5) or in any other situation not described in subsection (b) or (b-5).

(k) Except when the notice and consent criteria are

satisfied under paragraph (2) of subsection (b-5), if an individual receives health care services under the situations described in subsection (b) or (b-5), no referral requirement or any other provision contained in the policy or certificate of coverage shall deny coverage, reduce benefits, or otherwise defeat the requirements of this Section for services that would have been covered with a participating provider. However, this subsection shall not be construed to preclude a provider contract with a health insurance issuer, or with an administrator or similar entity acting on the issuer's behalf, from imposing requirements on the participating provider, participating emergency facility, or participating health care facility relating to the referral of covered individuals to nonparticipating providers.

(l) Except if the notice and consent criteria are satisfied under paragraph (2) of subsection (b-5), cost-sharing amounts calculated in conformity with this Section shall count toward any deductible or out-of-pocket maximum applicable to in-network coverage.

(m) The Department has the authority to enforce the requirements of this Section in the situations described in subsections (b) and (b-5), and in any other situation for which 42 U.S.C. Chapter 6A, Subchapter XXV, Parts D or E and regulations promulgated thereunder would prohibit an individual from being billed or liable for emergency services furnished by a nonparticipating provider or nonparticipating

emergency facility or for non-emergency health care services furnished by a nonparticipating provider at a participating health care facility.

(n) This Section does not apply with respect to air ambulance or ground ambulance services. This Section does not apply to any policy of excepted benefits or to short-term, limited-duration health insurance coverage.

(Source: P.A. 102-901, eff. 7-1-22; 102-1117, eff. 1-13-23.)

Section 10. The Network Adequacy and Transparency Act is amended by changing Section 10 as follows:

(215 ILCS 124/10)

Sec. 10. Network adequacy.

(a) An insurer providing a network plan shall file a description of all of the following with the Director:

(1) The written policies and procedures for adding providers to meet patient needs based on increases in the number of beneficiaries, changes in the patient-to-provider ratio, changes in medical and health care capabilities, and increased demand for services.

(2) The written policies and procedures for making referrals within and outside the network.

(3) The written policies and procedures on how the network plan will provide 24-hour, 7-day per week access to network-affiliated primary care, emergency services,

reproductive health care, and women's principal health care providers.

An insurer shall not prohibit a preferred provider from discussing any specific or all treatment options with beneficiaries irrespective of the insurer's position on those treatment options or from advocating on behalf of beneficiaries within the utilization review, grievance, or appeals processes established by the insurer in accordance with any rights or remedies available under applicable State or federal law.

(b) Insurers must file for review a description of the services to be offered through a network plan. The description shall include all of the following:

(1) A geographic map of the area proposed to be served by the plan by county service area and zip code, including marked locations for preferred providers.

(2) As deemed necessary by the Department, the names, addresses, phone numbers, and specialties of the providers who have entered into preferred provider agreements under the network plan.

(3) The number of beneficiaries anticipated to be covered by the network plan.

(4) An Internet website and toll-free telephone number for beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries to access current and accurate lists of preferred providers, additional information about the plan, as well as any

other information required by Department rule.

(5) A description of how health care services to be rendered under the network plan are reasonably accessible and available to beneficiaries. The description shall address all of the following:

(A) the type of health care services to be provided by the network plan;

(B) the ratio of physicians and other providers to beneficiaries, by specialty and including primary care physicians and facility-based physicians when applicable under the contract, necessary to meet the health care needs and service demands of the currently enrolled population;

(C) the travel and distance standards for plan beneficiaries in county service areas; and

(D) a description of how the use of telemedicine, telehealth, or mobile care services may be used to partially meet the network adequacy standards, if applicable.

(6) A provision ensuring that whenever a beneficiary has made a good faith effort, as evidenced by accessing the provider directory, calling the network plan, and calling the provider, to utilize preferred providers for a covered service and it is determined the insurer does not have the appropriate preferred providers due to insufficient number, type, unreasonable travel distance or

delay, or preferred providers refusing to provide a covered service because it is contrary to the conscience of the preferred providers, as protected by the Health Care Right of Conscience Act, the insurer shall ensure, directly or indirectly, by terms contained in the payer contract, that the beneficiary will be provided the covered service at no greater cost to the beneficiary than if the service had been provided by a preferred provider. This paragraph (6) does not apply to: (A) a beneficiary who willfully chooses to access a non-preferred provider for health care services available through the panel of preferred providers, or (B) a beneficiary enrolled in a health maintenance organization. In these circumstances, the contractual requirements for non-preferred provider reimbursements shall apply unless Section 356z.3a of the Illinois Insurance Code requires otherwise. In no event shall a beneficiary who receives care at a participating health care facility be required to search for participating providers under the circumstances described in subsection (b) or (b-5) of Section 356z.3a of the Illinois Insurance Code except under the circumstances described in paragraph (2) of subsection (b-5).

(7) A provision that the beneficiary shall receive emergency care coverage such that payment for this coverage is not dependent upon whether the emergency services are performed by a preferred or non-preferred

provider and the coverage shall be at the same benefit level as if the service or treatment had been rendered by a preferred provider. For purposes of this paragraph (7), "the same benefit level" means that the beneficiary is provided the covered service at no greater cost to the beneficiary than if the service had been provided by a preferred provider. This provision shall be consistent with Section 356z.3a of the Illinois Insurance Code.

(8) A limitation that, if the plan provides that the beneficiary will incur a penalty for failing to pre-certify inpatient hospital treatment, the penalty may not exceed $1,000 per occurrence in addition to the plan cost sharing provisions.

(c) The network plan shall demonstrate to the Director a minimum ratio of providers to plan beneficiaries as required by the Department.

(1) The ratio of physicians or other providers to plan beneficiaries shall be established annually by the Department in consultation with the Department of Public Health based upon the guidance from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Department shall not establish ratios for vision or dental providers who provide services under dental-specific or vision-specific benefits. The Department shall consider establishing ratios for the following physicians or other providers:

(A) Primary Care;

(B) Pediatrics;

(C) Cardiology;

(D) Gastroenterology;

(E) General Surgery;

(F) Neurology;

(G) OB/GYN;

(H) Oncology/Radiation;

(I) Ophthalmology;

(J) Urology;

(K) Behavioral Health;

(L) Allergy/Immunology;

(M) Chiropractic;

(N) Dermatology;

(O) Endocrinology;

(P) Ears, Nose, and Throat (ENT)/Otolaryngology;

(Q) Infectious Disease;

(R) Nephrology;

(S) Neurosurgery;

(T) Orthopedic Surgery;

(U) Physiatry/Rehabilitative;

(V) Plastic Surgery;

(W) Pulmonary;

(X) Rheumatology;

(Y) Anesthesiology;

(Z) Pain Medicine;

(AA) Pediatric Specialty Services;

(BB) Outpatient Dialysis; ~~and~~

(CC) HIV; and~~.~~

(DD) Reproductive Health Care.

(2) The Director shall establish a process for the review of the adequacy of these standards, along with an assessment of additional specialties to be included in the list under this subsection (c).

(d) The network plan shall demonstrate to the Director maximum travel and distance standards for plan beneficiaries, which shall be established annually by the Department in consultation with the Department of Public Health based upon the guidance from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. These standards shall consist of the maximum minutes or miles to be traveled by a plan beneficiary for each county type, such as large counties, metro counties, or rural counties as defined by Department rule.

The maximum travel time and distance standards must include standards for each physician and other provider category listed for which ratios have been established.

The Director shall establish a process for the review of the adequacy of these standards along with an assessment of additional specialties to be included in the list under this subsection (d).

(d-5)(1) Every insurer shall ensure that beneficiaries have timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions

in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (4) of subsection (a) of Section 370c of the Illinois Insurance Code. Insurers shall use a comparable process, strategy, evidentiary standard, and other factors in the development and application of the network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions and those for the access to treatment for medical and surgical conditions. As such, the network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access shall equally be applied to treatment facilities and providers for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions and specialists providing medical or surgical benefits pursuant to the parity requirements of Section 370c.1 of the Illinois Insurance Code and the federal Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions shall, at a minimum, satisfy the following requirements:

(A) For beneficiaries residing in the metropolitan counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will, network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions means a beneficiary shall not have to travel longer than 30 minutes or 30 miles from the

beneficiary's residence to receive outpatient treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions. Beneficiaries shall not be required to wait longer than 10 business days between requesting an initial appointment and being seen by the facility or provider of mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions for outpatient treatment or to wait longer than 20 business days between requesting a repeat or follow-up appointment and being seen by the facility or provider of mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions for outpatient treatment; however, subject to the protections of paragraph (3) of this subsection, a network plan shall not be held responsible if the beneficiary or provider voluntarily chooses to schedule an appointment outside of these required time frames.

(B) For beneficiaries residing in Illinois counties other than those counties listed in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions means a beneficiary shall not have to travel longer than 60 minutes or 60 miles from the beneficiary's residence to receive outpatient treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions. Beneficiaries shall not be required to wait longer than 10 business days between requesting an initial appointment

and being seen by the facility or provider of mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions for outpatient treatment or to wait longer than 20 business days between requesting a repeat or follow-up appointment and being seen by the facility or provider of mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions for outpatient treatment; however, subject to the protections of paragraph (3) of this subsection, a network plan shall not be held responsible if the beneficiary or provider voluntarily chooses to schedule an appointment outside of these required time frames.

(2) For beneficiaries residing in all Illinois counties, network adequacy standards for timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions means a beneficiary shall not have to travel longer than 60 minutes or 60 miles from the beneficiary's residence to receive inpatient or residential treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions.

(3) If there is no in-network facility or provider available for a beneficiary to receive timely and proximate access to treatment for mental, emotional, nervous, or substance use disorders or conditions in accordance with the network adequacy standards outlined in this subsection, the insurer shall provide necessary exceptions to its network to ensure admission and treatment with a provider or at a

treatment facility in accordance with the network adequacy standards in this subsection.

(e) Except for network plans solely offered as a group health plan, these ratio and time and distance standards apply to the lowest cost-sharing tier of any tiered network.

(f) The network plan may consider use of other health care service delivery options, such as telemedicine or telehealth, mobile clinics, and centers of excellence, or other ways of delivering care to partially meet the requirements set under this Section.

(g) Except for the requirements set forth in subsection (d-5), insurers who are not able to comply with the provider ratios and time and distance standards established by the Department may request an exception to these requirements from the Department. The Department may grant an exception in the following circumstances:

(1) if no providers or facilities meet the specific time and distance standard in a specific service area and the insurer (i) discloses information on the distance and travel time points that beneficiaries would have to travel beyond the required criterion to reach the next closest contracted provider outside of the service area and (ii) provides contact information, including names, addresses, and phone numbers for the next closest contracted provider or facility;

(2) if patterns of care in the service area do not

support the need for the requested number of provider or facility type and the insurer provides data on local patterns of care, such as claims data, referral patterns, or local provider interviews, indicating where the beneficiaries currently seek this type of care or where the physicians currently refer beneficiaries, or both; or

(3) other circumstances deemed appropriate by the Department consistent with the requirements of this Act.

(h) Insurers are required to report to the Director any material change to an approved network plan within 15 days after the change occurs and any change that would result in failure to meet the requirements of this Act. Upon notice from the insurer, the Director shall reevaluate the network plan's compliance with the network adequacy and transparency standards of this Act.

(Source: P.A. 102-144, eff. 1-1-22; 102-901, eff. 7-1-22; 102-1117, eff. 1-13-23.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2024, except that the changes to Section 356z.3 of the Illinois Insurance Code take effect January 1, 2025.