

HCS HB 1375 -- TREATMENT OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

SPONSOR: Cooper

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Health Care Policy by a vote of 11 to 0.

This substitute allows physicians to use expedited partner therapy under certain conditions by dispensing and prescribing medications for partners of persons diagnosed with certain sexually transmitted diseases even when there is no existing physician/patient relationship only if the partner returns a medical history form to the physician. The physician must provide guidance on the preventative measures that can be taken to stop the spread of the disease. Immunity from civil liability is given to any licensed physician using expedited partner therapy unless the action is negligent, reckless, in bad faith, or malicious.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the diagnosis for chlamydia and gonorrhea is becoming prevalent and the most effective treatment is to provide care to both sexual partners. Expedited partner therapy has been clinically proven to be an effective way to treat the spread of these diseases. A physician needs to be able to write a single dose, pill-form prescription to the individual's sexual partner. There is an immunity clause to protect the prescribing physician. By eradicating these infections, it will drastically reduce the treatments women need for reproductive ailments as a result of these infections. This type of therapy has been enacted by 23 other states and endorsed by the Center for Disease Control and other national health organizations.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Cooper; Department of Health and Senior Services; Missouri Family Health Council; and Missouri State Medical Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.