SENATE
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BILL SUMMARY

S.F. No. 1946 – Nonopioid and nonpharmacologic pain management coverage provided by health plans requirement provision (as amended by the A-1)

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Bill Overview

S.F. 1946 requires health plans to provide coverage for nonopioid prescription drugs for the treatment and management of pain as an alternative to the prescription of opioids. The bill establishes minimum coverage requirements for nonopioid prescription drugs, prohibits preferential coverage of opioids, limits utilization controls on nonopioid treatments, and requires annual distribution of educational materials regarding pain treatment options.

Section Summary

Section 1 – (adds Minn. Stat. § 62Q.474; Treatment and Management of Pain)

Subdivision 1 (Requirement) This subdivision requires health plans to provide coverage for alternatives to the prescription of opioids to treat and manage pain, including nonopioid prescription drugs. The subdivision further requires that a health plan cover at least two alternative prescription drugs approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration to treat and manage pain that are not Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances.

Subdivision 2 (Prohibition) This subdivision establishes the following two prohibitions:

1. A health plan may not provide preferential coverage for or access to opioids.
2. A health plan may not impose utilization controls (including prior authorization or step therapy) on clinically appropriate nonopioid prescription drugs that are more restrictive than the least restrictive utilization controls applied to any clinically appropriate opioid drug.

Subdivision 3 (Educational materials) This subdivision requires health plan companies to (1) annually distribute educational materials to providers and enrollees regarding access to

alternative nonopioid options; and (2) make those materials publicly available on the company's website.

Effective Date. The section is effective January 1, 2027, and applies to health plans offered, issued, or renewed on or after that date.