

**§ 58-3-235. Selection of specialist as primary care provider.**

(a) Each insurer that offers a health benefit plan shall have a procedure by which an insured diagnosed with a serious or chronic degenerative, disabling, or life-threatening disease or condition, either of which requires specialized medical care may select as his or her primary care physician a specialist with expertise in treating the disease or condition who shall be responsible for and capable of providing and coordinating the insured's primary and specialty care. If the insurer determines that the insured's care would not be appropriately coordinated by that specialist, the insurer may deny access to that specialist as a primary care provider.

(b) The selection of the specialist shall be made under a treatment plan approved by the insurer, in consultation with the specialist and the insured or the insured's designee and after notice to the insured's primary care provider, if any. The specialist may provide ongoing care to the insured and may authorize such referrals, procedures, tests, and other medical services as the insured's primary care provider would otherwise be allowed to provide or authorize, subject to the terms of the treatment plan. Services provided by a specialist who is providing and coordinating primary and specialty care remain subject to utilization review and other requirements of the insurer, including its requirements for primary care providers. (2001-446, s. 1.3.)