

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6547

C 259 L 94

SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Providing for auditing of mental health systems.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Health & Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators Sheldon, Niemi, Prentice and Anderson)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

BACKGROUND:

The 1989 reform of the state's mental health system (SB 5400) had as one of its goals "... reduced administrative layering, duplication, and reduced administrative costs..."

Evaluation reports by the Legislative Budget Committee, the University of Washington and others have documented that this aim of the legislation may not have been achieved. In addition, mental health service providers, county personnel and state personnel continue to voice concern about duplicative auditing procedures, paperwork and other accountability measures. Some claim as much as half of the funding now provided to mental health programs is consumed in administrative oversight activities, making these funds unavailable to support direct patient care.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Social and Health Services must establish a project to streamline accountability systems for mental health programs by: identifying rules; monitoring functions and other requirements leading to inefficiencies and eliminating them; developing a single accountability system for all state appropriated funds for mental health services; replacing process regulations and reporting requirements with a set of outcome objectives outlined in the act; and evaluating the feasibility of expanding financial incentives for achieving outcomes in contracts with mental health service providers and regional support networks.

Mental health clients and their representatives will participate in the pilot projects.

The project must be implemented in at least two regional support networks by July 1995, with full implementation statewide by July 1997. The department must report to the Legislature annually. The department, regional support

networks and mental health service providers must also report on the need to change state or federal statutes, rules, policies or procedures to ensure the purposes of the act are implemented.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	46	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House refused to recede)

Conference Committee

House	97	0
Senate	46	0

EFFECTIVE: June 9, 1994