

to certain group plans and precludes them from varying annual or lifetime dollar limits from the limits applicable to medical and surgical services. MHPA sunsets in September 2001.

Summary of Bill: Certain mental illnesses diagnosed under the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders must be covered as any chronic medical condition.

If a minor is not covered under the categories of mental illness that are specified, then benefits must be made available pursuant to certain other criteria. The criteria include: the minor accessing care from a licensed or certified mental health professional on more than one occasion; the minor having been referred for a mental health evaluation by a probation counselor; or the minor having been admitted to an emergency room when it relates to the minor's mental status.

Rulemaking authority is given to the Insurance Commissioner.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.