
**Children & Family Services
Committee**

HB 2397

Brief Description: Establishing a pilot program to deliver mental health treatment to children.

Sponsors: Representative Dickerson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a pilot program to support local efforts to implement evidence-based mental health services provided to children.

Hearing Date: 1/12/06

Staff: Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

Background:

The Delivery of Mental Health Services in Washington

Since 1989, mental health services in Washington have been delivered through Regional Support Networks (RSNs). The RSNs were established to develop local systems of care for persons with mental illness. Counties or groups of counties were authorized to become RSNs, contract with licensed service providers, and deliver services directly. Fourteen RSNs across the state were established to coordinate and deliver mental health services to persons with mental illness.

In 2005, the legislature passed E2SHB 1290 that required the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to establish a procurement process to establish RSNs that included a request for qualification. Existing RSNs are permitted to respond to the request for qualification and, if the RSN meets all the applicable requirements, they will be awarded the contract by the DSHS. If the existing RSN does not respond to the request for qualification, or is unable to comply with its requirements, the DSHS will utilize a request for proposal process to establish new RSNs. The definition of a RSN was also broadened to include a counties or other entities.

Evidence-Based Practice

Evidence-based practices are those practices which research has shown to produce consistently good outcomes. This concept originated in the field of physical health with the idea that for medical conditions a specific set of practices properly administered would ensure the greatest likelihood of recovery for the patient. The mental health field has also begun the process of scientific evaluation to identify evidence-based practices. A number of organizations, using their

own criteria, select certain practices and recognize them as meeting or exceeding the standards they have established.

In 2003, the Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to review research assessing the effectiveness of prevention and early intervention programs concerning children and youth. The Legislature required the WSIPP to use the research to identify specific research-proven programs that produce a positive return on the dollar compared to the costs of the program. The WSIPP was also required to develop criteria designed to ensure quality implementation and program fidelity of research-proven programs in the state.

As a result of the study, the WSIPP found that some prevention and early intervention programs for youth can give taxpayers a good return on their dollar. The study identified several programs, including some mental health programs, that are likely to reduce taxpayer and other costs in the future if they are properly implemented.

Summary of Bill:

To the extent funding is appropriated in the budget, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required to begin a pilot project to support local efforts to implement evidence-based mental health services provided to children. The pilot program is to consist of four program sites. The sites will be chosen through a request for proposal process.

Any county, or group of counties, may submit a proposal to be selected as a pilot site. The proposal must include the following information:

- 1) Who will be the lead agency for program. The lead agency may be a public or private agency and is not required to be a state agency or a Regional Support Network (RSN);
- 2) A description of how the lead agency will work with community partners to implement the pilot program;
- 3) Identification of areas of potential service needs based on input from the community partners;
- 4) Identification of the evidence-based mental health service or services that will be implemented in the area served by the pilot program. The request for proposal will include a list of services from which the county or group of counties may select the service they would like to offer in their community through the pilot program;
- 5) Identification of resources within the community that might support training for the implementation of the selected evidence-based service; and
- 6) Identification of the resources within the community that are able to support quality assurance and track outcomes for the program.

The pilot programs will receive support from the University of Washington School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Division.

Beginning in July 2007, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) will conduct a study of the pilot program to measure improvements in the delivery of mental health services to

children. The WSIPP will report its findings to the Legislature in a preliminary report due by December 1, 2007 and a final report due by December 1, 2008.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 01/05/2006.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.