
HOUSE BILL 2761

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Morrell and Green

Read first time 02/04/14. Referred to Committee on Health Care & Wellness.

1 AN ACT Relating to accurate data reporting concerning the practice
2 of psychiatric boarding; adding a new section to chapter 71.05 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Psychiatric boarding occurs when there is no
6 room for a patient requiring mental health treatment to receive
7 services in an appropriate care setting. Psychiatric boarding can
8 occur for hours or days in emergency departments while patients wait
9 for inpatient treatment in a community hospital or a residential
10 evaluation treatment facility. Patients requiring long-term treatment
11 may be boarded at a community hospital or residential evaluation
12 treatment facility while waiting for a bed at eastern or western state
13 hospital. It is widely recognized that the practice of psychiatric
14 boarding is detrimental to patients and results in failure to deliver
15 necessary treatment in a timely fashion. In recognition of this
16 problem, emerging standards from the joint commission specify patients
17 should not be detained in emergency departments for longer than four
18 hours. Currently, Washington state officials and other policy
19 stakeholders do not have accurate information about the practice of

1 psychiatric boarding within the state because data is not consistently
2 collected. In order to better understand the problem of psychiatric
3 boarding and take appropriate action, the legislature requires accurate
4 information. It is the intent of the legislature to create a process
5 for reporting that provides the data necessary for legislative decision
6 making.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 71.05 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 (1) A report must be made to the department:

10 (a) By a designated mental health professional when an individual
11 is detained pursuant to RCW 71.05.150 or 71.05.153, and remains in an
12 emergency department or other care setting that does not provide
13 certified evaluation and treatment facility services for more than four
14 hours after the detention order is issued or the individual is taken
15 into emergency custody; and

16 (b) By a regional support network, or other entity contracted with
17 the department to facilitate placement of patients, when an order for
18 ninety or one hundred eighty days of additional treatment is issued
19 pursuant to RCW 71.05.320, and an individual remains in a community
20 hospital or a residential evaluation treatment facility bed for greater
21 than twenty-four hours after the order is issued and prior to transfer
22 to eastern or western state hospital.

23 (2) The report required under subsection (1) of this section must
24 contain at a minimum:

25 (a) The date of the detention;

26 (b) The identity of the regional support network to which the
27 detained individual was assigned;

28 (c) The age of the individual detained;

29 (d) Reason for the individual's detention;

30 (e) Reason the individual was boarded;

31 (f) Location of boarding; and

32 (g) The amount of time the individual boarded.

33 (3) The department shall create a standardized reporting form for
34 the report required under subsection (1) of this section and may
35 require additional reporting elements as it determines are necessary or
36 desirable.

1 (4) The department shall create an annual report to be displayed on
2 its web site that accurately displays:
3 (a) The number of detained individuals boarded pursuant to
4 subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section for the year in each regional
5 support network;
6 (b) The average amount of time individuals were boarded;
7 (c) The most frequent reasons individuals were boarded; and
8 (d) The most common location individuals were boarded.
9 (5) The report in subsection (4) of this section may not display
10 protected health information as that term is used in the health
11 insurance portability and accountability act of 1996, nor information
12 contained in mental health treatment records as that term is used in
13 chapter 70.02 RCW or elsewhere in state law, and must otherwise be
14 compliant with state and federal privacy laws.

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