

SSB 5839 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Human Services & Early Learning

NOT CONSIDERED 12/23/2019

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Homeless shelters have seen an
4 increase in the number of physically or cognitively impaired elderly
5 and people with disabilities who need medicaid personal care
6 services. In addition to presenting with cognitive impairment and
7 memory issues, assistance is needed with walking, transferring,
8 toileting, showering, and other personal care tasks. Homeless seniors
9 and people with disabilities are also in need of transportation to
10 medical, pharmacy, and other health care appointments.

11 The number of homeless seniors and people with disabilities in
12 shelters has increased dramatically over the last several years. The
13 national alliance to end homelessness estimated in 2007 homeless
14 people age sixty-two and older who sought shelter accounted for 2.9%
15 of the country's homeless population. In an October 2018 one day
16 count in the largest homeless shelter in Pierce county twenty-six
17 percent, or forty-three people, were over the age of sixty. This data
18 is similar in King county, where it is estimated that thirty-six of
19 the homeless are over the age of fifty.

20 The legislature finds the increased numbers of seniors and people
21 with disabilities experiencing homelessness to be troubling and that
22 tailored interventions are needed to address the issue. Specifically,
23 the legislature desires to bring medicaid personal care services to
24 homeless seniors and people with disabilities in a shelter setting by
25 expanding a promising best practices program and by piloting a
26 personal care services program to bridge the time a person presents
27 with limitations at a homeless shelter and the person becomes
28 eligible for medicaid services.

29 (2) The department of social and health services and a large
30 social services provider that runs a shelter and a home care program
31 partnered in an attempt to bring medicaid personal care services to

1 frail seniors and people with disabilities who were living in the
2 shelter. The partnership had the goal of providing relief as well as
3 testing to see if these services could help people out of
4 homelessness by providing stability and support to help connect them
5 more to the community. A department of social and health services
6 case manager held regular weekly office hours at the shelter in order
7 to assess guests who shelter staff identified as needing services.
8 Once an assessment was complete and services were accepted by the
9 guest, the home care agency would staff the guests with trained
10 caregivers. The initial results of this partnership were excellent;
11 six of the seven homeless who received services found permanent
12 housing. All of the people met the definition of "chronically
13 homeless." None returned to homelessness.

14 The partnership between the department of social and health
15 services and the large social services provider is continuing and the
16 ongoing results are matching the initial results with chronically
17 homeless seniors and people with disabilities finding permanent
18 housing at a much higher rate than the overall homeless shelter
19 population.

20 The legislature desires this model to be expanded and directs the
21 department of social and health services to investigate through this
22 pilot project the practice of sending a case manager into homeless
23 shelters to assist seniors and people with disabilities in accessing
24 services.

25 The legislature finds that the outcome of people finding
26 permanent housing who have received personal care through this model
27 is significant. The legislature notes the success of this partnership
28 is based on homeless seniors and people with disabilities being able
29 to navigate the assessment process. The legislature notes that many
30 people, especially the chronic homeless, are not able to successfully
31 navigate the system and are in need of immediate assistance.

32 (3) The legislature desires to rapidly assist homeless seniors
33 and people with disabilities who present with needs as described in
34 subsection (1) of this section. Therefore, the legislature intends to
35 establish a pilot project to pay for personal care services from the
36 time a homeless senior or person with disabilities presents at a
37 shelter to the time they become eligible for medicaid personal care
38 services.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The department of social and health
2 services shall establish a pilot project to provide personal care
3 services to homeless seniors and persons with disabilities from the
4 time the person presents at a shelter to the time they become
5 eligible for medicaid personal care services.

6 (2) The department shall contract with a single nonprofit
7 organization that provides personal care services to homeless persons
8 and operates a twenty-four hour homeless shelter, and that is
9 currently partnering with the department to bring medicaid personal
10 care services to homeless seniors and persons with disabilities.

11 (3) The pilot shall fund two personal care aides at thirty hours
12 per week (two .75 FTEs) to be added to the staff of the homeless
13 shelter operated by the nonprofit organization. The services provided
14 shall match what is now available in the medicaid personal care
15 program. The department shall administer the pilot within funds
16 provided for the pilot and report the outcomes to the legislature.

17 (4) The department shall submit a report by January 1, 2021, to
18 the governor and appropriate legislative committees. The report shall
19 address the following:

20 (a) The number of people served in the pilot;

21 (b) The number of people served in the pilot who transitioned to
22 medicaid personal care;

23 (c) The number of people served in the pilot who found stable
24 housing;

25 (d) For persons who receive personal care services under the
26 pilot, if available, (i) the number of times the person had an
27 emergency room visit in the six months prior to entering the shelter,
28 and (ii) the number of times the person has had an emergency room
29 visit in the time period after the person began receiving personal
30 care services through the pilot program; and

31 (e) Any additional data and information deemed relevant by the
32 contractor or the department.

33 (5) This section expires June 30, 2021."

34 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Extends the due date for the report to the Governor and Legislature by one month to January 1, 2021. Extends the expiration date of the pilot by six months to June 30, 2021.

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