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**SENATE BILL 5273**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Orwall, Cleveland, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Krishnadasan, Nobles, Saldaña, Salomon, Shewmake, Slatter, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to the availability of community violence prevention and intervention services; adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW; and adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.09 RCW to read as follows:

(1)(a) Subject to amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the authority shall administer funding for programs that offer community violence prevention and intervention services provided by community violence professionals to youth and adults who have been violently injured, are at risk of experiencing violent injury, or have experienced chronic exposure to community violence. The programs may be based at a hospital or at a community organization to which clients are referred by a licensed health care provider. Programs that serve youth must demonstrate the ability to coordinate with the school districts in the area served by the program. Beginning January 1, 2027, all community violence professionals must complete training in accordance with the curriculum standards established in section 2 of this act prior to providing services.

(b) The authority shall provide funds to a minimum of four programs, including at least one program located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains and at least one program located west of the crest of the Cascade mountains. The authority shall prioritize funding to programs serving communities with high rates of firearm violence.

(c) The funding shall be used by programs to:

(i) Establish and support program operations necessary to offer community violence prevention and intervention services;

(ii) Beginning July 1, 2026, coordinate with the department of health to ensure community violence professionals employed by the program receive training in accordance with the curricula standards established in section 2 of this act;

(iii) Offer community violence prevention and intervention services, upon referral from a licensed health care provider, to youth and adults who have been violently injured, are at risk of experiencing violent injury, or have experienced chronic exposure to community violence; and

(iv) Upon receipt of the approval in subsection (2) of this section, prepare the program to transition to billing medical assistance for community violence prevention and intervention services.

(d) Upon receipt of the approval in subsection (2) of this section, the authority may establish time limits for the receipt of funds under this subsection to allow for the establishment of new programs.

(2)(a) By July 1, 2026, the authority shall seek approval from the federal centers for medicare and medicaid services to secure federal financial participation in the costs of providing community violence prevention and intervention services through community violence professionals who provide timely interventions for youth and adults enrolled in a medical assistance program under this chapter upon referral by a licensed health care provider if the health care provider determines that the enrollee has been violently injured, is at risk of experiencing violent injury, or has experienced chronic exposure to community violence.

(b) Community violence prevention and intervention services under (a) of this subsection must be provided by a community violence professional. Effective January 1, 2027, the community violence professional must have completed training in accordance with the curricula standards established in section 2 of this act.

(3) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Community violence" means an intentional act of interpersonal violence committed by someone who is not intimately related to the victim.

(b) "Community violence prevention and intervention services" means evidence-informed, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, supportive and nonpsychotherapeutic services provided by a community violence professional, within or outside of a clinical setting. "Community violence prevention and intervention services" includes the following activities within the scope of practice of the community violence professional for the purposes of promoting improved health outcomes and positive behavioral change, preventing injury recidivism, and reducing the likelihood that victims of acts of community violence may commit or promote violence themselves: Facilitating behavior change, providing social-emotional support, peer support and peer counseling, mentorship, conflict mediation and crisis intervention, care coordination, targeted case management, referrals to credentialed health care providers or social services providers, community and school support services, patient education and screening services, group and individual health education and health coaching, health navigation, transitions of care support, and screening and assessment for nonclinical and social needs.

(c) "Community violence professional" means an individual identified as a mentor, violence interrupter, community member, credible messenger, advocate, peer, activist, community health worker, or health professional licensed or certified by the department of health who has behavioral health in their scope of practice, who has completed the training in section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.70 RCW to read as follows:

By January 1, 2026, the department, after consulting with Harborview medical center, shall establish standards for curricula for education programs that train persons to serve as community violence professionals, and provide community violence prevention and intervention services identified under section 1 of this act. The curricula must, at a minimum, include instruction in basic trauma-informed care, community-based prevention and intervention strategies, case management, referral practices, advocacy practices, and state and federal privacy requirements. Education programs may be private or public entities that operate on a local, state, or national basis, including programs that offer community violence prevention and intervention services under section 1 of this act. The department may adopt rules to establish the curricula standards.

**--- END ---**