

Human Services Committee - mental health proposals

Sec. A. SOTERIA HOUSE

If the Commissioner of Mental Health determines that Soteria House is available to accept residents prior to January 1, 2015 and there are funds available in the Department's budget, the Commissioner shall prioritize the opening of Soteria House.

Sec. B. MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET PRESENTATION

In order for the General Assembly to evaluate whether the State is meeting the goals in 2012 Acts and Resolves No. 79 of increasing community supports, decreasing inpatient care, and moving toward a less coercive system, the Departments of Mental Health and of Vermont Health Access shall present a unified expenditure and utilization analysis to the General Assembly for all proposed inpatient psychiatric care supported by the State in fiscal year 2016. The analysis shall distinguish between each of the following funding categories:

- (1) level 1 inpatient psychiatric services;
- (2) other involuntary inpatient psychiatric services;
- (3) inpatient services for community rehabilitation and treatment clients; and
- (4) inpatient services for other Medicaid patients.

Sec. C. TRANSPORTING PATIENTS

The Commissioner of Mental Health shall only enter into contracts with designated professionals or law enforcement officers for the transport of persons pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 7511 if, by entering into the contract, the designated professionals or law enforcement officers agree to comply with the provisions of that section.

Sec. D. REPORT; MINORS WAITING FOR INPATIENT BEDS

On or before January 15, 2015, the Department of Mental Health shall submit to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and to the House Committee on Human Services a report pertaining to minors waiting in an emergency department for an acute inpatient psychiatric bed. The report shall include data on the frequency and length of waits in an emergency department.

Sec. E. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL STAFFING

(a) The Department of Mental Health shall conduct an ongoing assessment of the staffing at the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital to ensure that the staffing numbers and staff mix are appropriate in achieving the Hospital's mission. On or before January 15, 2015, the Department shall report the expected patient outcomes and other criteria by which it will evaluate Hospital staffing to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and to the House Committee on Human Services.

(b) In its fiscal year 2017 budget proposal, the Department of Mental Health shall include any proposed adjustments to the staffing numbers or staffing mix at the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital as the result of its ongoing assessment.