ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4021

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 17, 2024

The Assembly Health Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4021.

This bill requires Medicaid coverage for community violence prevention services to an individual who has: 1) received medical treatment for an injury sustained as a result of an act of community violence, and 2) been referred by a certified or licensed health care provider or social services provider to receive community violence prevention services from a certified violence prevention professional, after the provider determines the beneficiary to be at elevated risk of a violent injury or retaliation resulting from another act of community violence.

This bill also requires that Department of Health, within six months of the effective date of the bill, to approve at least one accredited training and certification program for certified violence prevention professionals. A program approved by the department is to include:

1) At least 35 hours of initial training, collectively addressing all of the following: the effects of trauma and violence and the basics of trauma-informed care; community violence prevention strategies, including, but not limited to, conflict mediation and retaliation prevention related to community violence; case management and advocacy practices; and patient privacy and the federal “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996,”
P.L.104-191; and

2) At least six hours of continuing education every two years.

Any entity that employs or contracts with a certified violence prevention professional to provide community violence prevention services will be required to:

1) maintain documentation that the certified violence prevention professional has completed a training and certification program approved by the department; and

2) ensure that the certified violence prevention professional is providing community violence prevention services in compliance with any applicable standards of care, rules, regulations, and governing law of the State or federal government.

No person, unless certified as a violence prevention professional pursuant to the bill, may use the title "certified violence prevention professional" or make use of any title, words, letters, abbreviations, or

insignia indicating or implying that the person is a certified violence prevention professional. Furthermore, nothing in the bill is to be construed to alter the scope of practice for any health care professional.

Under the bill, "community violence prevention services" means evidence-based, trauma-informed, supportive and non-psychotherapeutic services provided by a certified violence prevention professional, within or outside of a clinical setting, for the purpose of promoting improved health outcomes and positive behavioral change, preventing injury recidivism, and reducing the likelihood that individuals who are victims of community violence will commit or promote violence themselves. "Community violence prevention services" may include the provision of peer support and counseling, mentorship, conflict mediation, crisis intervention, targeted case management, referrals to certified or licensed health care professionals or social services providers, patient education, or screening services to victims of community violence. Additionally, "community violence" is defined to mean any intentional act of physical force against one or more other persons by an individual or small group of individuals committed in one or more public areas, where no actor is a family member or intimate partner of any victim.