

# ASSEMBLY, No. 5274

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 25, 2021

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD**

**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

**Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON**

**District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI**

**District 33 (Hudson)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttle, McKnight and Chaparro**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes pilot program to refer certain emergency department patients for development of coordinated behavioral health care treatment and support services plan.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/8/2021)**

1 AN ACT concerning behavioral health care and supplementing Title  
2 26 and Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. a. There is established in the Department of Human  
8 Services a pilot program to develop coordinated, specialized  
9 treatment plans for individuals with behavioral health issues,  
10 including, but not limited to, mild-to-moderate mental health issues,  
11 emotional disturbances, and substance use disorders.

12 b. The department shall select two hospitals in each Regional  
13 Health Hub designated pursuant to P.L.2019, c.517 (C.30:4D-8.16  
14 et seq.) to participate in the pilot program. To the extent possible,  
15 the department shall seek to select for participation in the pilot  
16 program hospitals that are not currently affiliated with the Early  
17 Intervention Support Services program and hospitals that are  
18 connected with or demonstrate a plan to connect with the Regional  
19 Health Hub's health information network as well as the New Jersey  
20 Health Information Network.

21 c. Hospitals participating in the pilot program shall refer any  
22 patient presenting at the hospital's emergency department with a  
23 behavioral health issue, including, but not limited to, a mild-to-  
24 moderate mental health issue, emotional disturbance, or substance  
25 use disorder, which behavioral health issue does not meet the  
26 criteria for admission to inpatient care, to the Regional Health Hub  
27 of which the hospital is a member. The regional Health Hub shall  
28 evaluate the patient and develop a coordinated behavioral health  
29 treatment plan for the patient, which plan shall identify wraparound  
30 support services appropriate to the patient's treatment needs.

31 d. Each designated Regional Health Hub shall provide  
32 administrative and support services to member hospitals  
33 participating in the pilot program to refer patients to the Regional  
34 Health Hub for the development of a coordinated behavioral health  
35 treatment plan. Each Regional Health Hub shall develop protocols  
36 for use by the Regional Health Hub and hospitals participating in  
37 the pilot program, which protocols shall:

38 (1) be designed to ensure that patients referred to the Regional  
39 Health Hub under the pilot program are provided timely referrals to  
40 behavioral health treatment and support services appropriate to the  
41 patient's behavioral health and related wraparound social services  
42 needs, including, but not limited to, the Early Intervention Support  
43 Services program, medication-assisted treatment, cash assistance  
44 programs, housing assistance programs, and other appropriate  
45 services as may be available and as are consistent with the patient's  
46 coordinated behavioral health treatment plan; and

47 (2) include requirements for timely follow up with patients,  
48 transportation coordination services, and assistance in scheduling

1 appointments for primary care services and other appropriate health  
2 care services.

3 e. To the extent possible, Regional Health Hubs providing  
4 referrals in connection with a behavioral health treatment plan  
5 developed pursuant to subsection c. of this section to a patient who  
6 is enrolled in the State Medicaid program shall seek to ensure that  
7 all such referrals are made to authorized Medicaid providers.

8  
9 2. The Commissioner of Human Services may adopt rules and  
10 regulations, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,”  
11 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as are necessary to implement  
12 the provisions of this act.

13  
14 3. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply for such  
15 State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to  
16 implement the provisions of this act and to secure federal financial  
17 participation for State Medicaid expenditures under the federal  
18 Medicaid program in connection with the development of  
19 coordinated behavioral health treatment plans pursuant to this act.

20  
21 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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#### STATEMENT

25

26 This bill establishes a pilot program in the Department of Human  
27 Services (DHS) to develop coordinated, specialized treatment plans  
28 for individuals with behavioral health issues, including, but not  
29 limited to, mild-to-moderate mental health issues, emotional  
30 disturbances, and substance use disorders.

31 The DHS will be required to select two hospitals in each  
32 Regional Health Hub designated pursuant to P.L.2019, c.517  
33 (C.30:4D-8.16 et seq.) to participate in the pilot program. To the  
34 extent possible, the DHS is to select for participation in the pilot  
35 program hospitals that are not currently affiliated with the Early  
36 Intervention Support Services program and hospitals that are  
37 connected with or demonstrate a plan to connect with the Regional  
38 Health Hub’s health information network as well as the New Jersey  
39 Health Information Network.

40 Hospitals participating in the pilot program will be required to  
41 refer any patient presenting at the hospital’s emergency department  
42 with a behavioral health issue, including, but not limited to, a mild-  
43 to-moderate mental health issue, emotional disturbance, or  
44 substance use disorder, which behavioral health issue does not meet  
45 the criteria for admission to inpatient care, to the Regional Health  
46 Hub of which the hospital is a member. The regional Health Hub  
47 will evaluate the patient and develop a coordinated behavioral  
48 health treatment plan for the patient, which plan will include

1 identifying wraparound support services appropriate to the patient's  
2 treatment needs.

3 Each designated Regional Health Hub will be required to provide  
4 administrative and support services to member hospitals  
5 participating in the pilot program to refer patients to the Regional  
6 Health Hub for the development of a coordinated behavioral health  
7 treatment plan. Regional Health Hubs will be required to develop  
8 protocols for use by the Regional Health Hub and hospitals  
9 participating in the pilot program, which protocols are to:

10 (1) be designed to ensure that patients referred to the Regional  
11 Health Hub under the pilot program are provided timely referrals to  
12 behavioral health treatment and support services appropriate to the  
13 patient's behavioral health and related wraparound social services  
14 needs, including, but not limited to, the Early Intervention Support  
15 Services program, medication-assisted treatment, cash assistance  
16 programs, housing assistance programs, and other appropriate  
17 services as may be available and as are consistent with the patient's  
18 coordinated behavioral health treatment plan; and

19 (2) include requirements for timely follow up with patients,  
20 transportation coordination services, and assistance in scheduling  
21 appointments for primary care services and other appropriate health  
22 care services.

23 To the extent possible, Regional Health Hubs providing referrals  
24 under the bill in connection with a behavioral health treatment plan  
25 to a patient who is enrolled in the State Medicaid program are to  
26 seek to ensure that all such referrals are made to authorized  
27 Medicaid providers.

28 The Commissioner of Human Services will be required to apply  
29 for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to  
30 implement the provisions of the bill and to secure federal financial  
31 participation for State Medicaid expenditures under the federal  
32 Medicaid program in connection with the development of  
33 coordinated behavioral health treatment plans pursuant to the bill.