

SENATE, No. 3437

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 11, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

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.



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.

22

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24 STATEMENT

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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.