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## OLR Bill Analysis

**sHB 6510 (as amended by House "A")\***

### ***AN ACT REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), by December 1, 2021, to develop a document for each mental health region describing the behavioral and mental health evaluation and treatment resources available to children. DCF must do so in consultation with the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council (BHPOC), the Mental Health and Addiction Services and Public Health departments, and DCF's Youth Suicide Advisory Board.

Under the bill, BHPOC must (1) distribute the documents electronically to each licensed hospital that has an emergency department and to each local and regional board of education and (2) make them available on the council's website.

Starting by December 1, 2022, the bill requires DCF to annually review and update the documents as necessary. DCF must provide any updated documents to BHPOC, and the council must distribute and make them available in the manner described above.

The bill also requires hospital emergency departments, starting on January 1, 2022, to provide a copy of the applicable documents to the parents or guardians of each child upon the child's discharge from the emergency department.

It also requires each local and regional board of education to (1) distribute the applicable document to parents and guardians and certain students starting January 1, 2022, and (2) make the document available on its website by that date.

\*House Amendment "A" (1) makes DCF, rather than BHPOC, the lead agency in the development, review, and update of the resource document; (2) makes BHPOC's role consultative in the development of the document but maintains the underlying bill's requirement for the council to distribute the document; (3) broadens the population of children covered by the hospital distribution provision by no longer limiting it to those showing certain behavioral health symptoms; (4) adds the provisions on board of education distribution of the document; and (5) makes other minor changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provisions on board of education distribution is effective July 1, 2021.

### **DOCUMENT DESCRIBING AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

Under the bill, each document must provide information on mental health evaluation and treatment resources available to children in their respective mental health region.

The documents must contain contact information for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and a list of evaluation and treatment providers, including mobile crisis intervention services providers. The list must include the providers' physical locations, if applicable; types of services offered; and contact information.

### **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS' DISTRIBUTION**

Under the bill, hospital emergency departments must provide the parent or guardian with the DCF documents that pertain to the mental health region where the (1) department is located and (2) child lives, if different, so long as the child lives in the state.

The emergency departments must provide copies of the documents:

1. in printed form or through the child's patient chart in the hospital's electronic health record system, so long as the chart was created before the date of the child's discharge, and
2. by email to the parent or guardian's electronic mail address, if the parent or guardian chooses this.

## **SCHOOL BOARDS' DISTRIBUTION**

The bill requires each local and regional board of education to:

1. make the DCF document described above pertaining to its region available on its website by January 1, 2022, and
2. starting January 1, 2022, distribute it (a) to any student taking a course in health and safety and (b) at least semiannually, in September and May, to the parents and guardians of each student in the school district.

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/11/2021)

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 30 Nay 0 (05/06/2021)