

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT LEAD A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF A MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

WHEREAS, many adults with serious mental illness lack necessary support and services to live in their communities and are at risk of grave neglect, homelessness or institutionalization in hospitals or jails; and

WHEREAS, many children and youth with serious mental illness lack adequate services that are community-based and family-based and are at risk of suspension, expulsion or dropping out of school, removal from their biological families to residential treatment, acute hospitalization, therapeutic foster care, incarceration and sometimes homelessness; and

WHEREAS, state-supported services to low-income adults with mental illness who are not currently eligible for medicaid are funded largely by the state general fund; and

WHEREAS, a medicaid waiver could leverage federal dollars by making many such adults eligible for medicaid services and enable the state to draw federal matching funds for these state expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico has already demonstrated success and cost-effectiveness in serving children and adults with other disabilities in home- and community-based settings through the developmental disabilities medicaid waiver, the disabled and elderly medicaid waiver, the medically fragile medicaid waiver and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome medicaid waiver;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be requested to lead a task force to study and make recommendations for the development of a medicaid waiver program to serve persons with serious mental illness in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include representation from the department of health, the children, youth and families department, agencies and professionals providing services to children or adults with serious mental illness, a statewide alliance for the mentally ill, an organization of parents with behaviorally different children, an organization for protection and advocacy of persons with disabilities, adult consumers of mental health services and family members of adults, children or youth with serious mental illness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force consider options for consumer and family self-directed services and that the task force consider the option of a separate mental health waiver as well as the option of including appropriate mental health services within a broader waiver program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force, through the human services department, report its findings and recommendations to the legislative finance committee and to the interim legislative health and human services committee at their respective October 2003 meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretaries of health, children, youth and families and human services and to the chairs of the legislative finance committee and the legislative health and human services committee.

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