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SENATE BILL 65

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

Cisco McSorley

AN ACT

RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH; ENACTING THE SAFE HOUSE ACT;
ESTABLISHING THE SAFE HOUSE AND CRISIS FUND; MAKING AN
APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] SHORT TITLE.--This act may be
cited as the "Safe House Act".

SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] DEFINITIONS.--As used in the
Safe House Act:

A. "adjunct services" means nonconventional
behavioral health services offered as complementary to or
integrated with conventional behavioral health services,
including art therapy, acupuncture, biofeedback therapy,
mindfulness meditation, visualization, breath meditation and
transcendental meditation;

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1 B. "core services" means conventional behavioral
2 health services that are essential to outpatient treatment,
3 including group counseling and therapy, individual counseling,
4 psychoeducational programming, pharmacotherapy and medication
5 management, ambulatory detoxification, pharmacotherapies for
6 addiction, monitoring of alcohol and drug use, case management,
7 facilitation to community-based support groups and referral to
8 medical treatment, vocational training and employment services;

9 C. "department" means the human services
10 department;

11 D. "early intervention services" means services
12 designed to provide a resident a safe, supportive and affirming
13 nonclinical residence where the person may access behavioral
14 health services to integrate the meaning of what the person is
15 experiencing and regain equilibrium and the ability to relate
16 effectively to other people. "Early intervention services"
17 includes peer support with an emphasis on relationship-
18 building;

19 E. "enhanced services" means services that are
20 added and delivered either on-site or through functional and
21 formal linkages with community-based agencies or individual
22 providers, including adult education, transportation services,
23 housing and food programs, recreational activities, nicotine-
24 cessation treatment, licensed child care and parenting skills
25 training;

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1 F. "peer support specialist" means a person who has
2 previously experienced urgent behavioral health needs and has
3 recovered and who has successfully completed training
4 qualifying that person to work with a resident;

5 G. "resident" means an adult who is experiencing
6 symptoms related to urgent behavioral health needs but does not
7 require hospitalization and who voluntarily resides in a safe
8 house; and

9 H. "safe house" means a nonclinical environment
10 that offers early intervention services by housing no more than
11 six voluntary residents who engage in routine activities of
12 daily living and learn about tools for recovery through
13 experience and peer support.

14 SECTION 3. [NEW MATERIAL] PEER SUPPORT TRAINING.--The
15 department shall provide by rule for training and credentialing
16 of peer support specialists; provided that each peer support
17 specialist shall personally have experienced urgent behavioral
18 health needs and shall be certified as having completed
19 training in de-escalation techniques, cultural competency, race
20 relations, the recovery process and avoidance of aggressive
21 confrontation prior to working at a safe house.

22 SECTION 4. [NEW MATERIAL] SAFE HOUSE PROGRAM--
23 ELIGIBILITY.--

24 A. The department shall administer safe houses in
25 rural and urban communities.

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1 B. A safe house authorized by this section shall
2 offer early intervention services that:

3 (1) serve residents who are eligible for the
4 services and not eligible for federal medical assistance
5 programs;

6 (2) are staffed twenty-four hours a day by one
7 or more peer support specialists;

8 (3) employ a licensed clinician full time and
9 a psychiatric consultant at least part time;

10 (4) facilitate reentry into independent
11 living;

12 (5) offer a mix of core services, enhanced
13 services and adjunct services;

14 (6) accept a resident, on a first-come, first-
15 served basis;

16 (7) base length of stay on mental health
17 screening and assessment tools; and

18 (8) are a part of a system of care continuum
19 to include the interagency behavioral health purchasing
20 collaborative's housing initiatives, local housing programs,
21 community-based support services and the department's
22 comprehensive community support services program.

23 C. Within one week of a resident's departure from a
24 safe house, the department shall refer the resident to a
25 service provider to coordinate care and provide support for the

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1 resident.

2 D. As part of the planning and development of the
3 safe houses, the department shall consult with community
4 stakeholders, including those who use the behavioral health
5 system and their family members, providers of conventional,
6 complementary or integrative behavioral health services,
7 advocates, local collaboratives, local planning and zoning
8 entities, the behavioral health planning council and others
9 with subject matter expertise.

10 SECTION 5. [NEW MATERIAL] SAFE HOUSE AND CRISIS FUND--
11 CREATED--PURPOSE.--The "safe house and crisis fund" is created
12 in the state treasury. The fund shall consist of
13 appropriations, gifts, grants and donations. Balances in the
14 fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the
15 general fund. The interagency behavioral health purchasing
16 collaborative shall administer the fund for the purpose of
17 providing early intervention services to persons with urgent
18 behavioral health needs. Disbursements may be made on warrants
19 drawn by the secretary of finance and administration upon
20 vouchers signed by the secretary of human services.

21 SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION.--One million dollars
22 (\$1,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the human
23 services department for expenditure in fiscal year 2020 and
24 subsequent fiscal years to administer a safe house program to
25 provide early intervention services to persons with urgent

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1 behavioral health needs in rural and urban communities. Any
2 unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a
3 fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.