

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 53

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE INTERAGENCY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PURCHASING
12 COLLABORATIVE AND ITS MEMBER DEPARTMENTS TO JOIN ADVOCATES AND
13 PROVIDERS IN DEVELOPING AN EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR
14 PEOPLE LIVING WITH PSYCHOTIC MENTAL ILLNESSES.

15
16 WHEREAS, true preventive treatment of all diseases is an
17 attractive but elusive measure to improve or maintain quality
18 of life; and

19 WHEREAS, serious mental illness has been established as a
20 biologically based illness affecting the brain; and

21 WHEREAS, serious mental illness refers specifically to
22 psychotic illnesses, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective
23 disorder, bipolar disorder, clinical depression and others; and

24 WHEREAS, about one-half of persons living with a serious
25 mental illness have poor insight and fail to recognize the

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1 debilitating effects of the disorder, which hinders effective
2 treatment; and

3 WHEREAS, about one percent of the population has a serious
4 mental illness with poor insight; and

5 WHEREAS, New Mexico has approximately nineteen thousand
6 persons suffering from a serious mental illness with poor
7 insight; and

8 WHEREAS, the functionality of a person decreases with each
9 psychotic break; and

10 WHEREAS, time required for recovery from a psychotic break
11 increases after each successive incident; and

12 WHEREAS, approximately ten to fifteen percent of all
13 persons suffering from bipolar disorder and schizophrenia die
14 from the illness through suicide; and

15 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a shortage of acute adult
16 psychiatric hospital beds available for persons with serious
17 mental illness, as compared with national standards, and this
18 shortage reduces access to hospitalization; and

19 WHEREAS, many of those suffering from serious mental
20 illness end up homeless and incarcerated; and

21 WHEREAS, those suffering from mental illness now total
22 approximately one-fourth of the state's jail population; and

23 WHEREAS, many of the state's jails are not physically
24 equipped to segregate a mentally ill person from others; and

25 WHEREAS, many jails lack psychiatric expertise available

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1 to evaluate or treat a mentally ill person; and

2 WHEREAS, the impact on a person suffering from a serious
3 mental illness is more than just psychological, as serious
4 mental illness with poor insight affects a person's ability to
5 be and remain employed, the ability to obtain housing and the
6 ability to be involved in and maintain personal relationships;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, preventive measures are limited for effective
9 treatment of serious mental illness; and

10 WHEREAS, there is often conflict between possible medical
11 practices and civil liberties when treating those with poor
12 insight into their mental illness;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
14 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the interagency behavioral health
15 purchasing collaborative, through the behavioral health
16 planning council, be requested to join other stakeholders to
17 develop humane and effective strategies to implement an early
18 intervention program serving persons with serious mental
19 illness and who have poor insight in order to reduce the
20 numbers of persons incarcerated, treated in long-term acute
21 hospital care or homeless and to improve the quality of life
22 and increase productivity of those living with a serious mental
23 illness; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that stakeholders include
25 representatives of the department of health, the human services

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1 department, the aging and long-term services department and the
2 children, youth and families department; the single statewide
3 behavioral health entity; the New Mexico behavioral health
4 institute at Las Vegas; the New Mexico hospital association;
5 the protection and advocacy system; the New Mexico association
6 of counties; at least four peers or consumers who are patients
7 representing the local behavioral health collaborative and
8 their constituents; the national alliance on mental illness,
9 representing consumers and families; and consultants or their
10 designated experts from the national institute of mental
11 health; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency behavioral
13 health purchasing collaborative be requested to report its
14 findings to the appropriate interim legislative committee by
15 December 1, 2009; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
17 transmitted to the interagency behavioral health purchasing
18 collaborative; to the secretaries of health, human services,
19 aging and long-term services and children, youth and families;
20 and to the behavioral health planning council.