

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 248

BY REPRESENTATIVE SELDERS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) to form a group to study reimbursement rates for outpatient behavioral health services as they relate to other southern states and to report its findings by February 1, 2024.

WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Medicaid enrollees are enrolled in one of five managed care organizations (MCO); and

WHEREAS, Medicaid has the primary responsibility to oversee the MCO contracts while the office of behavioral health of LDH is responsible for the portions of the contracts that relate to behavioral health; and

WHEREAS, according to LDH, Mental Health Rehabilitation (MHR) services are available throughout the state and offered by approximately three hundred twenty-five providers; and

WHEREAS, MHR services consist of community psychiatric supportive treatment, psychosocial rehabilitation, and many other treatment methods; and

WHEREAS, all MHR providers are required to be licensed by the health standards section of LDH, be accredited, and meet other LDH requirements in order to contract with one or more MCOs; and

WHEREAS, MHR services are often delivered in combination with outpatient services and employ a variety of licensed and unlicensed staff; and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of such treatment is recovery and to lower emergency room utilization, inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations, and institutional care; and

WHEREAS, the MCO must make a determination of whether the member meets medical necessity standards, and the eligibility process includes provider referral and authorization of services; and

WHEREAS, additionally, MHR services require prior authorization, and the length of the authorization may vary from two to six months, depending on the MCO; and

WHEREAS, all enrollees must have a treatment plan submitted to the enrollee's MCO no later than thirty days after the initial prior authorization; and

WHEREAS, to address behavioral health services in this state, the Legislature of Louisiana passed Senate Bill No. 213 of the 2022 Regular Session; Governor John Bel Edwards signed the instrument, and it became Act No. 503; and

WHEREAS, Act No. 503 affects behavioral health service providers who provide community psychiatric support and treatment services or psychosocial rehabilitation services to Medicaid enrollees; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to gauge the success of the legislation, the office of behavioral health planned a regional tour of the state to meet with MHR providers regarding Act No. 503; and

WHEREAS, it is important to assess the service reports for providers who offer care to individuals with more complex behavioral health issues; and

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the Legislature of Louisiana to urge LDH to study alternative assessment tools to capture the needs of individuals affected by such mental health issues and to ensure that a study is conducted on the reimbursement rates for outpatient behavioral health services.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to form a group to study reimbursement rates for outpatient behavioral health services and to report its findings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group shall consider the possibility of using a standard method of assessment for all programs that serve individuals with such behavioral health issues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following individuals shall participate in the study group:

(1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

(2) The assistant secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health office of behavioral health or his designee.

(3) The deputy assistant secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health office of behavioral health or his designee.

(4) The executive director of the Louisiana Medicaid program or his designee.

(5) Eight designated service provider representatives to be determined by the Louisiana Department of Health.

(6) The executive director of the Louisiana Rural Mental Health Alliance or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before February 1, 2024, the group shall submit to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library a written report of its findings and recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include comparative rates for outpatient behavioral health services from other southern states, which include but are not limited to Texas, Arkansas, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the designated service provider representatives to be determined by the Louisiana Department of Health, and the executive director of the Louisiana Rural Mental Health Alliance.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES