

Legislative Analysis



CMHSP PREADMISSION SCREENING

Mitchell Bean, Director
Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 1121 as passed by the Senate

Sponsor: Sen. Tony Stamas

House Committee: Health Policy

Senate Committee: Health Policy

First Analysis (6-12-06)

BRIEF SUMMARY: The bill would allow a CMHSP to employ a licensed Bachelor's social worker to provide preadmission screening services.

FISCAL IMPACT: The bill would not have a fiscal impact on the state or local units of government.

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

A community mental health services program (CMHSP) is required to have one or more preadmission screening units that operate 24 hours a day in order to screen individuals being considered for admission into hospitals or alternative treatment programs. These preadmission screening units must be staffed by mental health professionals, which have for years included individuals holding a Bachelor's degree in social work. However, the Public Health Code was amended in 2004 by Public Act 61 to license, instead of register, social workers. The bill created a Bachelor's level and a Master's level license. Later that year, Public Act 499, which made numerous changes to the Mental Health Code, was enacted. Public Act 499 also revised the definition of "mental health professional" to incorporate the new license structure for social workers but included only a licensed Master's social worker in addition to several professions in which individuals are trained and experienced in the area of mental illness or developmental disabilities. The result is that currently, a CMHSP can not employ licensed Bachelor's social workers to staff the prescreening units. This has created a staffing difficulty for some CMHSPs, particularly those located in rural areas. Legislation has been offered to allow CMHSPs once again to employ individuals with a Bachelor's degree in social work to provide prescreening services.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

Senate Bill 1121 would amend the Public Health Code to also allow CMHSPs to employ, in addition to mental health professionals, licensed Bachelor's social workers to provide preadmission screening services.

(Under the code, "mental health professional" means an individual trained and experienced in the area of mental illness or developmental disabilities and who is a licensed physician, a licensed psychologist, a registered professional nurse, a licensed

master's social worker, a licensed professional counselor, or a licensed marriage and family therapist.)

MCL 330.1409

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill corrects what many believe to be an unintended effect of legislation enacted in 2004. There has been a long history of community mental health services programs employing Bachelor's level social workers to staff the preadmission screening units. The bill merely reinstates the status quo of past years.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers indicated support for the bill. (6-6-06)

The Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards indicated support for the bill. (6-6-06)

The Michigan Nurses Association indicated support for the bill. (6-6-06)

The Department of Community Health indicated a position of neutrality on the bill. (6-6-06)

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky
Fiscal Analyst: Margaret Alston

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.