

LEGISLATIVE BILL 871

Approved by the Governor March 14, 2012

Introduced by Gloor, 35.

FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Behavioral Health Services Act; to amend sections 71-806, 71-809, and 83-368, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to provide for policies relating to financial eligibility of consumers and schedules of fees and copays; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 71-806, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

71-806 (1) The division shall act as the chief behavioral health authority for the State of Nebraska and shall direct the administration and coordination of the public behavioral health system, including, but not limited to: (a) Administration and management of the division, regional centers, and any other facilities and programs operated by the division; (b) integration and coordination of the public behavioral health system; (c) comprehensive statewide planning for the provision of an appropriate array of community-based behavioral health services and continuum of care; (d) coordination and oversight of regional behavioral health authorities, including approval of regional budgets and audits of regional behavioral health authorities; (e) development and management of data and information systems; (f) prioritization and approval of all expenditures of funds received and administered by the division, including: The the establishment of rates to be paid; and reimbursement methodologies for behavioral health services; methodologies to be used by regional behavioral health authorities in determining a consumer's financial eligibility as provided in subsection (2) of section 71-809; and fees and copays to be paid by consumers of such services; (g) cooperation with the department in the licensure and regulation of behavioral health professionals, programs, and facilities; (h) cooperation with the department in the provision of behavioral health services under the medical assistance program; (i) audits of behavioral health programs and services; and (j) promotion of activities in research and education to improve the quality of behavioral health services, recruitment and retention of behavioral health professionals, and access to behavioral health programs and services.

(2) The department shall adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Nebraska Behavioral Health Services Act.

Sec. 2. Section 71-809, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

71-809 (1) Each regional behavioral health authority shall be responsible for the development and coordination of publicly funded behavioral health services within the behavioral health region pursuant to rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the department, including, but not limited to, (a) administration and management of the regional behavioral health authority, (b) integration and coordination of the public behavioral health system within the behavioral health region, (c) comprehensive planning for the provision of an appropriate array of community-based behavioral health services and continuum of care for the region, (d) submission for approval by the division of an annual budget and a proposed plan for the funding and administration of publicly funded behavioral health services within the region, (e) submission of annual reports and other reports as required by the division, (f) initiation and oversight of contracts for the provision of publicly funded behavioral health services, and (g) coordination with the division in conducting audits of publicly funded behavioral health programs and services.

(2) Each regional behavioral health authority shall adopt a policy for use in determining the financial eligibility of all consumers and shall adopt a uniform schedule of fees and copays, based on the policy and schedule developed by the division, to be assessed against consumers utilizing community-based behavioral health services in the region. The methods used to determine the financial eligibility of all consumers shall take into account taxable income, the number of family members dependent on the consumer's income, liabilities, and other factors as determined by the division. The policy and the schedule of fees and copays shall be approved by the regional governing board and included with the budget plan submitted to the division annually. Providers shall charge fees consistent with the schedule of fees and copays in accordance with the financial eligibility of all consumers but not

in excess of the actual cost of the service. Each regional behavioral health authority shall assure that its policy and schedule of fees and copays are applied uniformly by the providers in the region.

~~(2)~~ (3) Except for services being provided by a regional behavioral health authority on July 1, 2004, under applicable state law in effect prior to such date, no regional behavioral health authority shall provide behavioral health services funded in whole or in part with revenue received and administered by the division under the Nebraska Behavioral Health Services Act unless:

(a) There has been a public competitive bidding process for such services;

(b) There are no qualified and willing providers to provide such services; and

(c) The regional behavioral health authority receives written authorization from the director and enters into a contract with the division to provide such services.

~~(3)~~ (4) Each regional behavioral health authority shall comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the department relating to the provision of behavioral health services by such authority, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations which (a) establish definitions of conflicts of interest for regional behavioral health authorities and procedures in the event such conflicts arise, (b) establish uniform and equitable public bidding procedures for such services, and (c) require each regional behavioral health authority to establish and maintain a separate budget and separately account for all revenue and expenditures for the provision of such services.

Sec. 3. Section 83-368, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

83-368 ~~The~~ Except as provided in section 71-809, the department shall determine the ability of a patient to pay by consideration of the following factors: (1) Taxable income reportable under Nebraska law; (2) the patient's age; (3) the number of his or her dependents and their ages and mental and physical conditions; (4) the patient's length of care or treatment; (5) his or her liabilities; and (6) his or her assets including health insurance coverage.

Sec. 4. Original sections 71-806, 71-809, and 83-368, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.