

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2007-228

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3 REQUESTING THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH
4 ARKANSAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO REFER TO THE HOUSE AND SENATE
5 INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR A STUDY
6 OF THE PROGRAMS, FUNDING, AND CERTIFICATION POLICIES REGARDING
7 REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

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9 WHEREAS, the Children's Behavioral Health Care Commission, having
10 worked for just one (1) year, is only now beginning to get a grasp on the
11 many issues facing mental health services for children across Arkansas; and
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13 WHEREAS, the commission's primary concerns involve quality,
14 consistency, service availability, and additional services that should be
15 included under Arkansas's Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental
16 Illness; and
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18 WHEREAS, additional services that the commission has identified for
19 consideration include:

- 20 Telemedicine reimbursement for the under twenty-on (21)
21 population;
22 Substance abuse reimbursement through Rehabilitation Services for
23 Persons with Mental Illness; and
24 Specialized care; and
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26 WHEREAS, disparities in reimbursement among Rehabilitation Services for
27 Persons with Mental Illness programs threaten to disrupt services; and
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29 WHEREAS, a flood of new applications for certification as
30 Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental Illness providers have been
31 submitted to the Division of Behavioral Health, many of the applications
32 coming from agencies and facilities that already receive reimbursement
33 through the State of Arkansas, but under different licenses, for instance,
34 through the Division of Youth Services, the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse
35 Prevention, and the Department of Community Correction; and
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1 WHEREAS, these disparate applications raise concerns for the future
2 health of the statewide system, including (1) funding, shortages of mental
3 health professionals, service saturation in some locations with resulting
4 service shortages in other locations, (2) concerns that the creation of many
5 new provider programs will outpace the System of Care implementation plan
6 approved by the Commission, and (3) that the state's ability to manage and
7 monitor programs will be impaired in the face of the dramatic increase in
8 applications and providers; and

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10 WHEREAS, unlike the Certificate of Need methodology, there is no
11 formula to determine the appropriate level of services necessary to maximize
12 supply and demand for Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental
13 Illness; and

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15 WHEREAS, a study should be conducted to consider an immediate freeze on
16 approval of any pending Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental
17 Illness Certification Applications; and

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19 WHEREAS, this modified moratorium can also be the gatekeeper to ensure
20 that funding is secured and managed as necessary to properly treat this
21 critical population of children; and

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23 WHEREAS, the interim study can be a guide to managing the
24 Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental Illness provider pool to
25 ensure that services are available in the underserved areas of the state,

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27 NOW THEREFORE,

28 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH
29 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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31 THAT the Arkansas Legislative Council the Legislative Council of The
32 Eighty-Sixth Arkansas General Assembly refer to the House and Senate Interim
33 Committees on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor a study of the programs,
34 funding, and certification policies regarding Rehabilitation Services for
35 Persons with Mental Illness.

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1 Respectfully submitted,

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5 Senator Jimmy Jeffress

6 District 24

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