

## LEGISLATIVE BILL 901

Approved by the Governor April 2, 2014

Introduced by McGill, 26.

FOR AN ACT relating to public health and welfare; to amend section 71-830, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to provide for psychology internships as prescribed; to change duties of the Behavioral Health Education Center; to eliminate obsolete provisions; to adopt the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act; and to repeal the original section.

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

Section 1. Section 71-830, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012, is amended to read:

71-830 (1) The Behavioral Health Education Center is created beginning July 1, 2009, and shall be administered by the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

(2) The center shall:

(a) (i) Provide funds for two additional medical residents in a Nebraska-based psychiatry program each year starting in 2010 until a total of eight additional psychiatry residents are added in 2013. Beginning in 2011 and every year thereafter, the center shall provide psychiatric residency training experiences that serve rural Nebraska and other underserved areas. As part of his or her residency training experiences, each center-funded resident shall participate in the rural training for a minimum of one year. Beginning in 2012, a minimum of two of the eight center-funded residents shall be active in the rural training each year; and

(ii) Provide funds for five one-year doctoral-level psychology internships in Nebraska within twelve months after the effective date of this act and every year thereafter and increase the number of interns in the program to ten within thirty-six months after the effective date of this act. The interns shall be placed in communities so as to increase access to behavioral health services for patients residing in rural and underserved areas of Nebraska;

(b) Focus on the training of behavioral health professionals in telehealth techniques, including taking advantage of a telehealth network that exists, and other innovative means of care delivery in order to increase access to behavioral health services for all Nebraskans;

(c) Analyze the geographic and demographic availability of Nebraska behavioral health professionals, including psychiatrists, social workers, community rehabilitation workers, psychologists, substance abuse counselors, licensed mental health practitioners, behavioral analysts, peer support providers, primary care physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, and pharmacists, and physician assistants;

(d) Prioritize the need for additional professionals by type and location;

(e) Establish learning collaborative partnerships with other higher education institutions in the state, hospitals, law enforcement, community-based agencies, and consumers and their families in order to develop evidence-based, recovery-focused, interdisciplinary ~~curriculum~~ curricula and training for behavioral health professionals delivering behavioral health services in community-based agencies, hospitals, and law enforcement. Development and dissemination of such ~~curriculum~~ curricula and training shall address the identified priority needs for behavioral health professionals; and

(f) Beginning in 2011, develop two interdisciplinary behavioral health training sites each year until a total of six sites have been developed. Four of the six sites shall be in counties with a population of fewer than fifty thousand inhabitants. Each site shall provide annual interdisciplinary training opportunities for a minimum of three behavioral health professionals.

(3) No later than December 1, 2011, and no later than December 1 of every odd-numbered year, thereafter, the center shall prepare a report of its activities under the Behavioral Health Workforce Act. The report shall be filed electronically with the Clerk of the Legislature and shall be provided electronically to any member of the Legislature upon request.

Sec. 2. Sections 2 to 8 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act.

Sec. 3. The Legislature finds that:

(1) National statistics show that one in four Americans will face a mental illness in his or her lifetime;

(2) Mental health first aid builds an understanding of how mental illness affects Nebraskans, provides an overview of common treatments, and teaches basic skills for providing assistance to a person who may be developing symptoms or experiencing a crisis;

(3) A mental health first aid program is an education program recognized on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices; and

(4) The Behavioral Health Education Center administered by the University of Nebraska Medical Center has conducted a series of mental health first aid training courses and the experience of providing such courses may be utilized regarding the implementation of a mental health first aid training program as prescribed by the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act.

Sec. 4. For purposes of the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act:

(1) Behavioral health regions means the behavioral health regions established pursuant to section 71-807; and

(2) Mental health first aid means the help provided to a person who is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse problem or in a mental health crisis before appropriate professional assistance or other supports are secured.

Sec. 5. (1) The Division of Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services shall establish a mental health first aid training program, using contracts through the behavioral health regions, to help the public identify and understand the signs of a mental illness or substance abuse problem or a mental health crisis and to provide the public with skills to help a person who is developing or experiencing a mental health or substance abuse problem or a mental health crisis and to de-escalate crisis situations if needed. The training program shall provide an interactive mental health first aid training course administered by the state's regional behavioral health authorities. Instructors in the training program shall be certified by a national authority for Mental Health First Aid USA or a similar organization. The training program shall work cooperatively with local entities to provide training for individuals to become instructors.

(2) The mental health first aid training program shall be designed to train individuals to accomplish the following objectives as deemed appropriate considering the trainee's age:

(a) Help the public identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental illness and substance abuse;

(b) Emphasize the need to reduce the stigma of mental illness; and

(c) Assist a person who is believed to be developing or has developed a mental health or substance abuse problem or who is believed to be experiencing a mental health crisis.

Sec. 6. The Division of Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services shall ensure that evaluative criteria are established which measure the efficacy of the mental health first aid training program, including trainee feedback, with the objective of helping the public identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental illness and alcohol and substance abuse. The behavioral health regions shall submit an aggregated annual report electronically to the Legislature on trainee demographics and outcomes of the established criteria.

Sec. 7. The behavioral health regions shall offer services to and work with agencies and organizations, including, but not limited to, schools, universities, colleges, the State Department of Education, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, law enforcement agencies, and local health departments, to develop a program that offers grants to implement the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act in ways that are representative and inclusive with respect to the economic and cultural diversity of this state.

Sec. 8. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate one hundred thousand dollars annually to the Department of Health and Human Services to carry out the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act.

Sec. 9. Original section 71-830, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012, is repealed.