

## CHAPTER 241

**AN ACT** concerning mental health services and supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

**BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:**

C.30:4-177.60 DHS to develop procedures for transfer of certain patients to appropriate treatment setting.

1. a. The Department of Human Services shall develop the following procedures to enable emergency departments in general hospitals to obtain emergency relief from the department in the case of patients in need of behavioral health services who remain in the emergency department for 24 hours or longer awaiting placement in an appropriate behavioral health setting:

(1) designate staff in the department who shall be notified by a general hospital when the hospital has a patient who has been awaiting placement in an appropriate behavioral health setting for 24 hours or longer;

(2) provide for clinical facilitators whose purpose is to review the clinical needs of the patient awaiting placement so that the patient can be transferred to a behavioral health setting that best meets the clinical needs of the patient as determined by the psychiatric team that evaluated the patient;

(3) provide for a mechanism that will enable the department to conduct ongoing assessments of patient flow and access to care; and

(4) set forth objective criteria for identifying resources that are needed to ensure timely implementation of the procedures required under this subsection.

b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall establish a mechanism to coordinate the department's procedures and policies with the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health and Senior Services, and such other governmental agencies and task forces that address the needs of consumers of mental health services and their families, as the commissioner deems appropriate.

c. The commissioner shall consult with the New Jersey Hospital Association, the Hospital Alliance of New Jersey, the New Jersey Council of Teaching Hospitals, community mental health advocacy organizations, and a mental health consumer in developing the procedures required pursuant to this section. The commissioner shall also seek input for the procedures from Statewide organizations that advocate for persons with mental illness and their families.

d. The commissioner shall issue a report of his findings and recommendations, including a summary of the procedures developed pursuant to this section, to the Governor and to the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and the Assembly Human Services Committee no later than 12 months after the effective date of this act.

e. The provisions of this act shall not apply to any patient who is under 18 years of age.

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire 18 months after the effective date.

Approved January 16, 2010.