

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1334

Authorizing a program to promote innovative approaches to securing prompt access to appropriate care for individuals presenting at emergency departments with acute mental health illness.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 6, 2019

Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Ms. HASSAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

Authorizing a program to promote innovative approaches to securing prompt access to appropriate care for individuals presenting at emergency departments with acute mental health illness.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Mental
5 Health Access from the Emergency Department”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE**
2 **CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS PRESENTING AT**
3 **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS WITH ACUTE**
4 **MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS.**

5 Subpart 3 of part B of title V of the Public Health
6 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–31 et seq.) is amended by
7 adding at the end the following:

8 **“SEC. 520N. SECURING APPROPRIATE CARE FOR ACUTE**
9 **MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS FOLLOWING AN**
10 **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ENCOUNTER.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
12 the Director of the Center for Mental Health Services,
13 may award grants on a competitive basis to eligible enti-
14 ties to implement innovative approaches to securing
15 prompt access to appropriate follow-on care for individuals
16 experiencing acute mental health episodes and presenting
17 for care in emergency departments.

18 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive
19 a grant under this section, an entity shall be a health care
20 facility licensed under applicable law that—

21 “(1) has an emergency department;

22 “(2) is staffed by medical personnel (which may
23 include emergency physicians, psychiatrists, psy-
24 chiatric registered nurses, mental health technicians,
25 clinical social workers, psychologists, and therapists)
26 capable of providing treatment focused on stabilizing

1 acute mental health conditions and assisting individ-
2 uals to access resources to continue treatment in the
3 least restrictive appropriate setting; and

4 “(3) has arrangements in place with other pro-
5 viders of care that can provide a full range of medi-
6 cally appropriate, evidence-based services for the
7 treatment of acute mental health episodes.

8 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity receiving a grant
9 under this section shall use funds received under such
10 grant to create, support, or expand programs or projects
11 intended to assist individuals who are treated at its emer-
12 gency department for acute mental health episodes and
13 to expeditiously transition such individuals to an appro-
14 priate facility or setting for follow-on care. Such uses may
15 include any of the following:

16 “(1) Emergency department evaluation, treat-
17 ment, stabilization, observation, and referral (includ-
18 ing implementation of validated screening tools).

19 “(2) Expediting placement in appropriate facili-
20 ties through activities such as expanded coordination
21 with regional service providers, assessment, peer
22 navigators, bed availability tracking and manage-
23 ment, transfer protocol development, networking in-
24 frastructure development, and transportation serv-
25 ices.

1 “(3) Increasing the supply of inpatient psy-
2 chiatric beds and alternative care settings such as
3 regional emergency psychiatric facilities.

4 “(4) Use of alternative approaches to providing
5 psychiatric care in the emergency department set-
6 ting, including through tele-psychiatric support and
7 other remote psychiatric consultation, implementa-
8 tion of peak period crisis clinics, or creation of psy-
9 chiatric emergency service units.

10 “(5) Such other activities as the Secretary may
11 determine appropriate.

12 “(d) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity desiring a
13 grant under this section shall prepare and submit an ap-
14 plication to the Secretary at such time and in such manner
15 as the Secretary may require. At a minimum, the applica-
16 tion shall include the following:

17 “(1) A description of identified need for acute
18 mental health services in the entity’s service area.

19 “(2) A description of the existing efforts of the
20 entity to meet the need for acute mental health serv-
21 ices in the service area, and identified gaps in the
22 provision of such services.

23 “(3) A description of the proposed use of funds
24 to meet the needs and gaps identified under para-
25 graph (2).

1 “(4) A description of how the entity will coordi-
2 nate its efforts with Federal, State, local, and pri-
3 vate entities within the service area.

4 “(5) A description of program objectives, how
5 the objectives are proposed to be met, and how the
6 provider will evaluate outcomes relative to objectives.

7 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
8 purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized
9 to be appropriated \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years
10 2021 through 2025.”.

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