

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4944

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to support pediatric behavioral health care integration and coordination, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 6, 2021

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to support pediatric behavioral health care integration and coordination, and for other purposes.

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 “Helping Kids Cope
5 Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT PEDIATRIC BEHAV-**
2 **IORAL HEALTH CARE.**

3 Subpart V of part D of title III of the Public Health
4 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 256) is amended by adding at the
5 end the following:

6 **“SEC. 340A-1. GRANTS TO SUPPORT PEDIATRIC BEHAV-**
7 **IORAL HEALTH CARE INTEGRATION AND CO-**
8 **ORDINATION.**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
10 the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
11 Administration, shall award grants to eligible entities for
12 the purpose of supporting pediatric behavioral health care
13 integration and coordination within communities to meet
14 local community needs.

15 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Entities eligible for
16 grants under subsection (a) include—

17 “(1) pediatricians;

18 “(2) children’s hospitals;

19 “(3) pediatric behavioral health providers with
20 the capacity to organize and implement activities
21 working with community organizations and pro-
22 viders; and

23 “(4) other entities as determined appropriate by
24 the Secretary.

25 “(c) PRIORITIZATION.—In awarding grants under
26 subsection (a), the Secretary shall prioritize applicants

1 that demonstrate the highest needs at the local level along
2 the care continuum for strengthening children’s behavioral
3 health crisis care and access.

4 “(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Activities that may be funded
5 through a grant under subsection (a) include—

6 “(1) the recruitment and retention of commu-
7 nity health workers or navigators to coordinate fam-
8 ily access to pediatric mental, emotional, and behav-
9 ional health services;

10 “(2) training the pediatric mental, emotional,
11 and behavioral health care workforce, relevant stake-
12 holders, and community members;

13 “(3) expanding evidence-based, integrated mod-
14 els of care for pediatric mental, emotional, and be-
15 havioral health services;

16 “(4) pediatric practice integration for the provi-
17 sion of pediatric mental, emotional, and behavioral
18 health services;

19 “(5) addressing surge capacity for pediatric
20 mental, emotional, and behavioral health needs;

21 “(6) providing pediatric mental, emotional, and
22 behavioral health services to children as delivered by
23 behavioral, emotional, and mental health profes-
24 sionals utilizing telehealth services;

1 “(7) establishing or maintaining initiatives to
2 decompress emergency departments, including par-
3 tial hospitalization, step down residency programs,
4 and intensive outpatient programs;

5 “(8) supporting, enhancing, or expanding pedi-
6 atric mental, emotional, and behavioral health pre-
7 ventive and crisis intervention services;

8 “(9) establishing or maintaining pediatric men-
9 tal, emotional, and behavioral health urgent care;

10 “(10) establishing or maintaining community-
11 based initiatives, such as school-based partnerships;
12 and

13 “(11) addressing other access and coordination
14 gaps to mental, emotional, and behavioral health
15 services in the community for children.

16 “(e) FUNDING.—To carry out this section, there is
17 hereby appropriated, out of amounts in the Treasury not
18 otherwise obligated, \$500,000,000 for each of fiscal years
19 2022 through 2026.

20 **“SEC. 340A-2. PEDIATRIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORK-**
21 **FORCE TRAINING PROGRAM.**

22 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
23 the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
24 Administration, shall award grants to eligible entities for

1 the purpose of supporting evidence-based pediatric behav-
2 ioral health workforce training.

3 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Entities eligible for
4 grants under subsection (a) include—

5 “(1) children’s hospitals; and

6 “(2) other pediatric health care providers as de-
7 termined appropriate by the Secretary.

8 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—The training that may be sup-
9 ported through a grant under subsection (a) includes ex-
10 panded training in pediatric behavioral health for physi-
11 cians and nonphysician practitioners, including the fol-
12 lowing practitioner types:

13 “(1) Child and adolescent psychiatrists.

14 “(2) Psychiatric nurses.

15 “(3) Psychologists.

16 “(4) Advanced practice nurses.

17 “(5) Family therapists.

18 “(6) Social workers.

19 “(7) Mental health counselors.

20 “(8) Other practitioner types as determined ap-
21 propriate by the Secretary.

22 “(d) FUNDING.—To carry out this section, there is
23 hereby appropriated, out of amounts in the Treasury not

- 1 otherwise obligated, \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years
- 2 2022 through 2026.”.

