

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 334

Short Title: MH/SA Central Assessment & Navigation Pilot. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Lee and Rabon (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 22, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CENTRAL ASSESSMENT AND NAVIGATION SYSTEM
3 PILOT PROGRAM IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF
4 INDIVIDUALS UTILIZING HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS FOR
5 MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** Pilot Program Created. – The Department of Health and Human
8 Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse
9 Services, in consultation with the local management entity/managed care organization
10 (LME/MCO) responsible for the management and provision of mental health, developmental
11 disabilities, and substance use disorder services in New Hanover County under the 1915(b)/(c)
12 Medicaid Waiver, shall oversee the establishment of a two-year pilot program in New Hanover
13 County to focus on assessing and navigating individuals seeking mental health or substance use
14 disorder services, or both, to appropriate community-based services or other community
15 resources in order to reduce the utilization of hospital emergency department services for
16 mental health and substance use disorder services.

17 **SECTION 1.(b)** Program Design and Location. – The pilot program shall be
18 conducted at New Hanover Regional Medical Center (NHRMC) and at Wellness City, operated
19 by Recovery Innovations, Inc., by a three-person centralized team. The three-person team shall
20 consist of the following individuals:

- 21 (1) A master's level, fully licensed clinician to perform comprehensive clinical
22 assessments of NHRMC patients and other New Hanover County residents
23 exhibiting symptoms of mental illness or substance use disorder who are
24 referred to the pilot program.
- 25 (2) A qualified professional to assist patients, particularly those with a
26 completed comprehensive clinical assessment, with identifying and
27 accessing appropriate community-based services or other community
28 resources.
- 29 (3) A North Carolina certified peer support specialist, with specialized training
30 and personal experience in successfully managing his or her own serious
31 mental illness or substance use disorder, to provide peer support services,
32 including encouraging patients to take personal responsibility for managing
33 their condition, assisting patients in establishing meaningful roles in society,
34 and providing patients with transportation to and from appointments.

35 **SECTION 1.(c)** Reports. – The LME/MCO responsible for the management and
36 provision of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services in New



1 Hanover County, in collaboration with New Hanover Regional Medical Center and Recovery
2 Innovations, Inc., shall make an interim report to the Department of Health and Human
3 Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse
4 Services, and the Fiscal Research Division on the effectiveness of the pilot program by July 1,
5 2018. The Division shall then make an interim report to the Joint Legislative Oversight
6 Committee on Health and Human Services by October 1, 2018, on the effectiveness of the
7 program and the costs associated with administering the program. By July 1, 2019, the
8 LME/MCO responsible for the management and provision of mental health, developmental
9 disabilities, and substance abuse services in New Hanover County, in collaboration with New
10 Hanover Regional Medical Center and Recovery Innovations, Inc., shall make a final report to
11 the Division on the effectiveness of the program. The Division shall make a final report to the
12 Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Fiscal Research
13 Division by October 1, 2019, on the effectiveness of the program, along with any
14 recommendations for sustaining or expanding the program.

15 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
16 Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and
17 Substance Abuse Services, the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the
18 2017-2018 fiscal year and the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the
19 2018-2019 fiscal year to fund the central assessment and navigation system pilot program
20 established under Section 1 of this act.

21 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.