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SENATE BILL 5563

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Hargrove, Stevens, Keiser, Rockefeller, Roach, Regala, Fairley, Shin, Swecker, Kauffman, Kilmer, McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, Tom, Murray, Zarelli, Carrell, Franklin, Kastama, Delvin, Poulsen, Kline, Rasmussen, Oemig, Benton, Haugen and Spanel

Read first time 01/24/2007. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to home visits by mental health professionals;  
2 adding new sections to chapter 71.05 RCW; and creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that designated mental  
5 health professionals go out into the community to evaluate people for  
6 potential detention under the state's involuntary treatment act. Also,  
7 designated mental health professionals and other mental health workers  
8 do crisis intervention work intended to stabilize a person in crisis  
9 and provide immediate treatment and intervention in communities  
10 throughout Washington state. In many cases, the presence of a second  
11 trained individual on outreach to a person's private home or other  
12 private location will enhance safety for consumers, families, and  
13 mental health professionals and will advance the legislature's interest  
14 in quality mental health care services.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 71.05 RCW  
16 to read as follows:

17 No designated mental health professional or crisis intervention  
18 worker shall be required to respond to a private home or other private

1 location to stabilize or treat a person in crisis, or to evaluate a  
2 person for potential detention under the state's involuntary treatment  
3 act, unless a second trained individual, determined by the clinical  
4 team, accompanies them. The second individual may be a law enforcement  
5 officer, a mental health professional, a mental health paraprofessional  
6 who has received training under section 5 of this act, or other first  
7 responder, such as fire or ambulance personnel. No retaliation may be  
8 taken against a worker who, following consultation with the clinical  
9 team, refuses to go on a home visit alone.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Each provider of designated mental health  
11 professional or crisis outreach services shall maintain a written  
12 policy that, at a minimum, describes the organization's plan for  
13 training, staff back-up, information sharing, and communication for  
14 crisis outreach staff who respond to private homes or nonpublic  
15 settings.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 71.05 RCW  
17 to read as follows:

18 Any mental health professional who engages in home visits to  
19 clients shall be provided by their employer with a wireless telephone  
20 or comparable device for the purpose of emergency communication.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 71.05 RCW  
22 to read as follows:

23 Any mental health professional who is dispatched on a crisis visit,  
24 as described in section 2 of this act, shall have prompt access to  
25 information about any history of dangerousness or potential  
26 dangerousness on the client they are being sent to evaluate that is  
27 documented in crisis plans or commitment records and is available  
28 without unduly delaying a crisis response.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 71.05 RCW  
30 to read as follows:

31 Annually, all community mental health employees who work directly  
32 with clients shall be provided with training on safety and violence  
33 prevention topics described in RCW 49.19.030. The curriculum for the

1 training shall be developed collaboratively among the department of  
2 social and health services, contracted mental health providers, and  
3 employee organizations that represent community mental health workers.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act may be known and cited as the Marty  
5 Smith law.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If specific funding for the purposes of this  
7 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by  
8 June 30, 2007, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and  
9 void.

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