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**Human Services Committee**

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**SB 6804**

**Brief Description:** Allowing the department of social and health services to adopt rules establishing standards for the review and certification of treatment facilities under the problem and pathological gambling treatment program.

**Sponsors:** Senator Kohl-Welles.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Allows the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to certify pathological gambling treatment facilities.
- Allows the DSHS to adopt rules establishing standards for the review and certification of pathological gambling treatment facilities.

**Hearing Date:** 2/18/10

**Staff:** Brian Kilgore (786-7119) and Linda Merelle (786-7092).

**Background:**

The Problem and Pathological Gambling Program (Program) was established in the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The Program provides for the prevention and treatment of problem and pathological gambling, and the training of professionals in the identification and treatment of problem and pathological gambling. When the Program was established, the DSHS was permitted to contract for any services provided under the Program but was not provided with rulemaking authority.

Most of the pathological gambling counseling services provided through the Program are provided by Chemical Dependency Practitioners (CDPs). Most CDPs are certified as Registered Counselors by the Department of Health. In 2008 the Legislature abolished the Registered Counselor credential, effective July 1, 2010, and replaced it with eight new credentials. Certified Registered Counselors are authorized to provide pathological gambling counseling services.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

None of the eight new credentials authorize credential holders to practice pathological gambling counseling.

The CDPs who currently provide the bulk of DSHS's pathological gambling counseling could continue their work if they became agency affiliated counselors. An agency affiliated counselor is a person who is engaged in counseling and is currently affiliated with an agency or facility operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington.

**Summary of Bill:**

The DSHS is permitted to certify treatment facilities to provide services under the Program. The DSHS may adopt rules establishing standards for the review and certification of treatment facilities under the Program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.