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**SENATE BILL 6416**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Cleveland, Rivers, Wellman, Wilson, C., Das, and Randall

AN ACT Relating to providing telehealth services at schools; creating a new section; making an appropriation; providing an effective date; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1)(a) The department of health, in consultation with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall award grant moneys to eligible school-based health centers projects to expand student access to mental and physical health care services and to improve the health and education outcomes of students through the use of telehealth.

(b) To be eligible for a grant under this subsection, a school-based health center must enter into an agreement with a school district. The project agreement must provide that: (i) The school-based health center is the distant site that provides telehealth in conjunction with a school nurse located at the originating site; and (ii) the school-based health center must allocate to the school district a portion of funds received under this subsection (1) to increase school nurse capacity and assist in offsetting costs incurred by the school district as a result of the school district's participation in the project.

(c) Funds described in this subsection (1) may be used to:

(i) Compensate the following individuals for services provided pursuant to a project: (A) A school nurse; (B) a licensed health care practitioner located at a school-based health center; and (C) administrative or technical staff at a school-based health center;

(ii) Cover the costs of: (A) Technical equipment necessary to provide telehealth; and (B) technical assistance related to the use and function of equipment necessary to provide telehealth; and

(iii) Cover other costs related to the project's provision of telehealth.

(2) The department of health:

(a) Shall assist school-based health centers and school districts that enter into project agreements in the efficient use of funds distributed under subsection (1) of this section.

(b) May coordinate with one or more statewide nonprofit organizations that have experience in supporting school-based health centers and school nurses to carry out their duties under this section.

(3) A school-based health center that operates a project shall report, on an interval determined by the department of health, to the department of health and the office of the superintendent of public instruction on the progress of the project in a manner that allows the department of health and the office of the superintendent of public instruction to determine the effectiveness of the project.

(4) The department of health shall establish a process to evaluate at least the following information regarding a project established under this section: (a) Billing practices and reimbursements; (b) access to health care services; (c) impact on student absence from schools; and (d) workflow practices.

(5) Not later than December 31, 2024, the department of health shall submit a report, in the manner provided in RCW 43.01.036, to the appropriate committees of the legislature, on the effectiveness and success of projects established under this section. The department of health may include recommendations to the legislature in the report.

(6) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Distant site" means the site where a physician licensed under chapter 18.71 RCW, or other licensed health care practitioner, who provides health care services through telehealth is located at the time the physician or licensed health care practitioner provides the health care service through telehealth.

(b) "Originating site" means the site where the patient is located at the time the patient receives health care services provided through telehealth.

(c) "School-based health center" means a health clinic that:

(i) Is located on the grounds of a school in a school district or on the grounds of a school operated by a federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization;

(ii) Is organized through collaboration among schools, communities, and health providers, including public health authorities;

(iii) Is administered by a county, state, federal, or private organization that ensures that certification requirements are met and provides project funding through grants, contracts, billing, or other sources of funds;

(iv) Is operated exclusively for the purpose of providing health services such as:

(A) Primary care;

(B) Preventive health care;

(C) Management and monitoring of chronic health conditions;

(D) Behavioral health care;

(E) Oral health care;

(F) Health education services; and

(G) The administration of vaccines recommended by the centers for disease control and prevention;

(v) Provides health services to children and adolescents by licensed or certified health professionals; and

(vi) May provide one or more health services to children and adolescents by a student enrolled in a professional medical, nursing, or dental program at an accredited university if the health service is within the student's field of study and training.

(d) "Telehealth" means the use of electronic and telecommunication technologies to deliver health care services to a patient.

(7) This section expires January 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The sum of nine hundred fifty thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, from the general fund to the department of health for the purposes of section 1(1)(c) of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 1 of this act takes effect June 30, 2020.

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