
Judiciary Committee

HB 1612

Title: An act relating to a public health educational platform for suicide prevention and strategies to reduce access to lethal means.

Brief Description: Creating a suicide-safer homes project account to support prevention efforts and develop strategies for reducing access to lethal means.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Harris, Jenkins, Goodman, Haler, Robinson, Fey, Kilduff and McBride.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the name of the Safe Homes Task Force to the Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force (Task Force) and revises its membership and duties.
- Creates a Suicide-Safer Homes Project within the Department of Health to accept public or private donations for deposit in a new account to be used by the Task Force to provide suicide prevention materials, training, and outreach programs, and appropriates \$200,000 from the State General Fund into the new account.
- Requires licensed dentists and licensed dental hygienists to complete one-time training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management.

Hearing Date: 2/15/17

Staff: Edie Adams (786-7180).

Background:

Safe Homes Task Force.

In 2016 legislation was enacted creating a Safe Homes Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force consists of a variety of stakeholders, including the Department of Health (DOH), representatives of suicide prevention organizations, the firearms industry and firearms rights organizations, individuals who have experienced suicide loss or survived suicide attempts, pharmacists and pharmacy organizations, the Department of Veterans Affairs, law enforcement, and others. Task

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.

Force membership is divided into a Suicide Prevention and Pharmacy Subcommittee and a Suicide Prevention and Firearms Subcommittee.

The Task Force is administered by the University of Washington School of Social Work, and its responsibilities include:

- developing suicide awareness and prevention messages to be used by firearms dealers, firearms ranges, and pharmacies, and in hunter safety classes;
- developing online trainings on suicide awareness and prevention for firearms dealers, firearms ranges, and their employees;
- developing suicide awareness and prevention messages for training for the schools of pharmacy and providing input on training being developed for community pharmacists; and
- creating, implementing, and evaluating a pilot in two counties that have high suicide rates to provide advocacy efforts and training to firearms dealers, pharmacies, health care providers, and law enforcement on pairing suicide awareness and prevention education with the provision of devices for safe storage of firearms and prescription medications.

The Task Force must submit reports to the Legislature and file a report by December 1, 2019.

Suicide Assessment, Treatment, and Management Training.

Certain licensed health professionals are required to complete training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management. Some of these professionals, like licensed social workers, mental health counselors, and psychologists, must complete the training every six years. Other professionals, like physicians, nurses, physician assistants, chiropractors, and pharmacists, only need to complete the training once. The training must be at least six hours in length, unless only screening and referral elements are appropriate for the professional's scope of practice, in which case the training only needs to be at least three hours in length.

Beginning January 1, 2017, the training must meet minimum standards adopted by the DOH in rule. The standards for six-hour trainings must require content specific to veterans and the assessment of issues related to imminent harm via lethal means or self-injurious behaviors. The three-hour training for pharmacists must include content related to the assessment of issues related to imminent harm via lethal means.

Summary of Bill:

Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force.

The Safe Homes Task Force is renamed the Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force (Task Force) and the Pharmacy Subcommittee is renamed the Health Care Subcommittee. Three additional members representing health care professionals providing suicide prevention training are added to the Task Force and Health Care Subcommittee. The Task Force must gather input on collateral educational materials that will help health care professionals in suicide prevention work. In addition, the Task Force must develop and prioritize a list of projects to carry out the task force's purposes and submit the prioritized list to the Department of Health (DOH) for funding.

A Suicide-Safer Homes Project is created within the DOH for the purpose of accepting private funds for use by the Task Force in developing and providing suicide education and prevention

programs. A Suicide-Safer Homes Account (Account) is created that consists of funds appropriated by the Legislature and receipts from gifts, grants, donations, or other funds from public or private sources to support the Suicide-Safer Homes Project. Only the Secretary of the DOH or the Secretary's designee may authorize expenditures from the Account to fund projects identified and prioritized by the Task Force. Funds in the Account may be used for developing and producing suicide prevention materials and training, providing financial incentives to encourage firearms dealers and others to participate in suicide prevention training, and implementing community outreach pilot programs.

The sum of \$200,000 is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, from the State General Fund to the Account.

Suicide Assessment, Treatment, and Management Training for Dentists and Dental Hygienists.

Licensed dentists and licensed dental hygienists must complete a one-time training on suicide assessment, treatment, and management. The training must be completed by the end of the dentist's or dental hygienist's first full continuing education reporting period after July 1, 2018, or during his or her first full continuing education reporting period after initial licensure, whichever is later. Three-hour trainings for dentists must include content related to the assessment of issues related to imminent harm via lethal means.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/9/17.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 5, relating to suicide assessment training for dentists and dental hygienists, which takes effect July 1, 2018.