
Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee

HB 1648

Brief Description: Providing for suicide awareness and prevention programs to create safer homes and reduce suicide among service members, veterans, and their families.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Klippert, Kilduff, Goodman, Lovick, Ryu, Appleton, Doglio, Ortiz-Self, Jinkins, Davis, Stanford, Reeves, Macri, Leavitt and Frame.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a statewide plan to reduce suicide among service members, veterans, and their families.
- Changes the name of the Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force to the Safer Homes, Suicide Aware Task Force (Task Force).
- Requires firearms dealers and licensed pharmacies to post and make available to customers suicide awareness and prevention materials prepared by the Task Force.
- Requires the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (PQAC) to conduct a survey of licensed pharmacist on methods to bridge the gap between practice and suicide awareness and prevention training.
- Requires the PQAC to exempt pharmacists from required suicide assessment, treatment, and management training if they complete the training curriculum prior to being licensed.

Hearing Date: 2/13/19

Staff: Edie Adams (786-7180).

Background:

Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force.

The Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force (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

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loss or survived suicide attempts, pharmacists and pharmacy organizations, the Department of Veterans Affairs, law enforcement, and others. Task 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
- engaging in public awareness campaigns and providing 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 annual reports to the Legislature and file a final report by December 1, 2019. The Task Force expires July 1, 2020.

Suicide Assessment, Treatment, and Management Training.

Licensed pharmacist must complete a one-time training on suicide assessment, treatment, and management. The training must include material regarding the assessment of issues related to imminent harm via lethal means. The training must be completed by the end of the pharmacist's first full continuing education reporting period after January 1, 2017, or during his or her first full continuing education reporting period after initial licensure, whichever is later.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) must develop and implement a statewide plan to reduce suicide among service members, veterans, and their families. In developing and implementing the plan, the DVA must:

- collaborate with government and nongovernment agencies and organizations to establish promising best practices for suicide awareness and prevention materials, training, and outreach programs targeted to service members, veterans, and their families;
- cultivate peer-led organizations serving veterans in transition and recovery;
- create and deliver statewide suicide awareness and prevention training programs with content specific to service members, veterans, and their families; and
- provide safer homes materials and trainings, and distribute safe firearms storage devices, to the Washington National Guard, the Washington State Patrol, allied veteran groups, and other organizations serving or employing veterans, following the recommendations of the Safer Homes, Suicide Aware Task Force.

The Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force is renamed the Safe Homes, Suicide Aware Task Force (Task Force). Suicide awareness and prevention materials developed by the Task Force must be delivered to all firearms dealers in the state by the Department of Licensing and to all licensed pharmacies by the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (PQAC). Firearms dealers must

post the materials on their premises and make the materials available to firearms purchasers and transferees, and licensed pharmacists must make these materials available to pharmacy customers at the point of sale.

The PQAC must survey each licensed pharmacist on methods to bridge the gap between practice and suicide awareness and prevention training, including barriers to putting the training into practice. The PQAC must compile and analyze the survey data and report the results to the Legislature by November 15, 2020. The PQAC must exempt pharmacists from required suicide assessment, treatment, and management training if they complete the training curriculum prior to being licensed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 6, 2019.

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