

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1532

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 31, 1995

Title: An act relating to the certification of mental health counselors.

Brief Description: Modifying certification of mental health counselors.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Dellwo, Ballasiotes, Cody, Cooke and Thibaudeau.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/28/95, 3/31/95 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Deccio, Fairley, Franklin, Winsley and Wood.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Mental health counselors who meet the qualifications specified by law may seek certification by the Department of Health. This is a voluntary credential which then allows the practitioner to use the title "certified mental health counselor."

Applicants must possess at least a master's degree in mental health counseling or equivalent semester hours in a substantially equivalent field, as well as postgraduate supervised practice. They must also pass an examination and have 24 months of postgraduate professional experience in a mental health setting.

Certified mental health counseling is defined as a service emphasizing a wellness model rather than an illness model.

There is no requirement for continuing education.

Summary of Bill: The qualifications for certification of mental health counselors include an equivalent behavioral science master's or doctoral degree in a related field as determined by the Secretary of Health, as well as two years of postgraduate supervised practice.

The definition of certified mental health counseling is augmented to include the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders.

The Secretary of Health is authorized to adopt rules requiring mandatory continuing education.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill brings statutory language in line with practice.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Michael Doctor (pro).