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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**HB 1784**

**Brief Description:** Improving coordination of services for children's mental health.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Darneille, Upthegrove, Chase, Linville, Wallace, Kagi, Kessler, Kenney, Schual-Berke, Wood, Dickerson, Santos, Simpson and Morrell.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Department of Social and Health Services and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement recommendations to improve the coordination and delivery of mental health treatment for children.

**Hearing Date:** 2/19/03

**Staff:** Sonja Hallum (786-7092).

**Background:**

The 2001-02 Biennial Budget directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to study children's public mental health services in Washington. The proviso was limited in scope and asked JLARC to make recommendations as appropriate for the improvement of services and system performance.

On August 7, 2002, JLARC completed its study on children's mental health. The JLARC recommendations included the following:

1. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), as a coordinating agency, should identify issues that limit its ability to coordinate children's mental health programs, and should make changes to support cross program collaboration and efficiency.
2. DSHS Mental Health Division (MHD) should continue to implement and collect reliable mental health cost service data to support an outcome reporting system specific to children's mental health.
3. The Medical Assistance Administration (MAA) and MHD in DSHS should jointly revise

the early periodic screening diagnosis and treatment plan (EPSDT) to reflect the current mental health system structure.

4. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and DSHS/MHD should identify examples of mental health and education systems coordination and share this information among other school districts, Regional Support Networks, and other agencies.

5. The Legislature should update statutes to reflect a focus on improvement of cost, service, and outcome data and eliminate the requirement to maintain an inventory of children's mental health services.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Legislature requires DSHS to implement the following recommendations within available resources by January 2004:

1. DSHS shall identify cross-agency business operation issues that limit the agency's ability to meet statutory intent to coordinate existing categorical children's mental health programs and funding;

2. DSHS shall collect reliable mental health cost, service, and outcome data specific to children. This information must be used to identify best practices and costs of services;

3. DSHS revise the early periodic screening diagnosis and treatment plan to reflect current mental health system structure;

4. DSHS and the OSPI shall jointly identify school districts where mental health and education systems coordinate services and resources to provide public mental health care for children. These agencies shall work together to share information about these approaches with other school districts, regional support networks, and state agencies.

DSHS is required to submit a report to the Legislature on the status of the implementation of the above recommendations by June 1, 2004 and each year thereafter until 2007.

The requirement of DSHS to maintain an inventory of children's mental health services is eliminated.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested.

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