

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6452

C 288 L 18
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Expanding the activities of the children's mental health services consultation program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Brown, Frockt, Carlyle, O'Ban, Walsh, Darneille, Miloscia, Kuderer and Saldaña).

Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Early Learning & Human Services
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: The Partnership Access Line (PAL) is a telephone-based child mental health consultation system for primary care providers. PAL is staffed by child psychiatrists affiliated with the University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital to deliver its consultation services. PAL has a master's-level social worker that assists with finding mental health resources for patients with any type of insurance—state, private, or no insurance. PAL is available to primary care doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants throughout the state of Washington.

PAL provides rapid consultation responses during business hours for any type of mental health issue relevant to a minor patient. PAL supports primary care providers—doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants with questions about mental health care such as diagnostic clarification, medication adjustment, or treatment planning. Child and adolescent psychiatrists are available to consult during business hours. PAL is available to providers caring for any patient in Washington; the consultation program is funded by the Legislature through the Health Care Authority (HCA).

Summary: The HCA must convene a group of specified stakeholders and organizations to submit a report to the Legislature and the Children's Mental Health Workgroup by December 1, 2018, to recommend:

- an alternative funding model for PAL; and
- a strategy to ensure that expanded PAL services do not duplicate existing Managed Care Organization requirements.

The pilot designation for currently existing PAL consultation services is removed. HCA must collaborate with the University of Washington, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral

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.

Sciences and Seattle Children's Hospital to implement a two-year pilot program PAL for Moms and Kids beginning January 1, 2019.

PAL for Moms and Kids must provide support for obstetricians, pediatricians, primary care providers, mental health professionals, and other health care professionals who provide care to pregnant women and new mothers through same-day telephone consultations in the assessment and provision of appropriate diagnosis and treatment of depression in pregnant women and new mothers.

PAL for Moms and Kids must facilitate referrals to children's mental health services and other resources for parents and guardians with concerns related to the mental health of the parent or guardian's child. Facilitation activities include:

- assessing the level of services needed by the child;
- identifying, within seven days of receiving a call from a parent or guardian, mental health professionals who are in-network with the child's health care coverage who are accepting new patients and taking appointments;
- coordinating contact between the parent or guardian and the mental health professional and providing postreferral reviews to determine if the child has outstanding needs.

In conducting its referral activities, PAL for Moms and Kids must collaborate with existing databases and resources to identify in-network mental health professionals.

The HCA, in collaboration with University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital must provide annual reporting of program outcomes and demographics, beginning December 30, 2019. Demographic information included in the annual pilot report may not include any personally identifiable information and must be limited to the individual's age, gender, and city and county of residence.

The HCA must enforce managed care contract requirements for network adequacy and care coordination to address barriers to access to mental health services.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 7, 2018