
SENATE BILL 5242

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Orwall, Harris, Hasegawa, Krishnadasan, Nobles, Shewmake, Valdez, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/14/25. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing an interactive screening program
2 to improve access to behavioral health resources for health care
3 providers; and adding new sections to chapter 43.70 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The department shall contract with a nonprofit entity to
8 establish an interactive program to improve access to behavioral
9 health resources for health care providers. The program must:

10 (a) Be evidence-based;

11 (b) Be available to any individual holding a professional
12 credential subject to chapter 18.130 RCW;

13 (c) Utilize a screening questionnaire, the results of which are
14 to be reviewed by a counselor to triage the user's level of distress;

15 (d) Allow the user to remain anonymous;

16 (e) Provide services which are completely confidential;

17 (f) Allow the user to interact with the counselor via email or
18 receive a referral for treatment; and

19 (g) Include facilitation of paid medical leave requests for
20 mental health conditions related to or exacerbated by clinician
21 distress and burnout.

1 (2) The costs of the program must be financed by an annual
2 surcharge added to the licensing fee for every licensed health
3 professional subject to chapter 18.130 RCW. The amount of the
4 surcharge must be uniform across professions and set by the secretary
5 in rule. The surcharges must be placed in the interactive screening
6 program account created in section 2 of this act to be used solely to
7 support the program established in this section.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 The interactive screening program account is created in the
11 custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from surcharges
12 collected under section 1 of this act must be deposited into the
13 account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for support
14 of the program established in section 1 of this act. Only the
15 secretary or the secretary's designee may authorize expenditures from
16 the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under
17 chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for
18 expenditures.

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