

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2273 Session of
2002

INTRODUCED BY SATHER, SCHULER, HERMAN, BEBKO-JONES, BELFANTI,
CAPPELLI, CLYMER, L. I. COHEN, CORRIGAN, CREIGHTON, CURRY,
DeLUCA, DeWEESE, J. EVANS, GEIST, HARHAI, HENNESSEY, HORSEY,
JAMES, JOSEPHS, LEVDANSKY, MANDERINO, MELIO, READSHAW, ROSS,
RUBLEY, SAINATO, SCHRODER, SEMMEL, STEELMAN, STURLA,
E. Z. TAYLOR, THOMAS, WATSON, WILT, WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD,
M. COHEN AND BROWNE, JANUARY 14, 2002

AS RE-REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, OCTOBER 7, 2002

AN ACT

1 Establishing the People Improving Lots of Lives for
2 Pennsylvania's Health Grant Program. ~~and making an~~
3 ~~appropriation.~~ <—

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the People
8 Improving Lots of Lives for Pennsylvania's Health Grant Program
9 Act.

10 Section 2. Purpose and findings.

11 (a) Purpose.--The purpose of this act is to reduce the
12 stigma and prejudice society puts on individuals with mental
13 illnesses by increasing public knowledge about mental health,
14 mental illness and mental illness treatment.

15 (b) Findings.--The General Assembly finds and declares as

1 follows:

2 (1) There are stigma and prejudice surrounding
3 individuals with mental illness.

4 (2) This stigma and prejudice lead to low self-esteem,
5 isolation and hopelessness for people with mental illness.

6 (3) This stigma and prejudice reduce patient access to
7 resources and opportunities.

8 (4) This stigma and prejudice discourage individuals
9 with mental illness from seeking appropriate and available
10 treatment for their illness.

11 (5) This stigma and prejudice arise from people's fear
12 of violence from individuals with mental illness.

13 (6) Overall, the likelihood of danger from individuals
14 with mental illness is low.

15 (7) The stigma and prejudice can be reduced through
16 programs of advocacy, public education and contact with
17 persons who suffer from mental illness.

18 (8) Mental health and mental illness are shaped by age,
19 gender, race and culture.

20 (9) To be effective, the diagnosis and treatment of
21 mental illness must be tailored to individual circumstances
22 that take into account age, gender, race and culture.

23 (10) Services that take these demographic factors into
24 consideration have the greatest chance of engaging people in
25 treatment, keeping them in treatment and helping them to
26 recover.

27 (11) Mental illnesses are legitimate health conditions
28 that are part of mainstream health care and are statistically
29 demonstrated to be responsive to treatment.

30 (12) Mental illness is the second leading cause of

1 disability and premature mortality in the United States.

2 (13) Prompt, appropriate treatment of mental illness is
3 critical to saving lives, strengthening families and
4 improving Pennsylvanians' health.

5 Section 4. Definitions.

6 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
7 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
8 context clearly indicates otherwise:

9 "Advisory committee." The People Improving Lots of Lives for
10 Pennsylvania's Health Advisory Committee established by this
11 act.

12 "Department." The Department of Public Welfare of the
13 Commonwealth.

14 "Entity." A qualified foundation, library, nonprofit
15 business or community-based organization.

16 "Mental illness." A diagnosable mental disorder.

17 "Secretary." The Secretary of Public Welfare of the
18 Commonwealth.

19 Section 5. Mental health awareness programs.

20 The secretary shall have the power and duty to:

21 (1) Make grants to programs that decrease the stigma and
22 prejudice toward people with mental illness.

23 (2) Designate, in conjunction with the Secretary of
24 Health and the Secretary of Aging, minimum standards each
25 program must meet by:

26 (i) Establishing eligibility qualifications for
27 grants.

28 (ii) Enumerating specific areas of coverage within
29 the program.

30 (iii) Establishing specific requirements to meet the

needs of race, culture and gender with an increased focus on minorities and various age groups in a program's service area.

(iv) Consulting with the advisory committee regarding eligibility and program standards.

(v) Meeting annually with the advisory committee.

Section 6. Authority for regulations.

The department shall have the power to promulgate regulations for programs created under this act.

Section 7. Advisory committee.

(a) Formation.--The secretary shall form a People Improving Lots of Lives for Pennsylvania's Health Advisory Committee.

(b) Composition.--

(1) The committee shall be comprised of 15 members, five of whom shall be actively practicing mental health providers licensed in this Commonwealth with experience in minority mental health issues, five of whom shall be individuals who receive or have received mental health treatment and five of whom shall be parents of children receiving mental health treatment.

(2) The Governor, the President pro tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives shall each appoint one actively practicing mental health provider licensed in this Commonwealth who has experience in minority mental health issues, one present or former mental health patient and one parent of a child receiving treatment for mental illness.

(3) Each appointing authority shall designate one member to serve for an initial term of two years, one member to

1 serve for an initial term of three years and one member to
2 serve for an initial term of four years. After the original
3 appointments are made, members shall serve for terms of four
4 years. A member shall serve until a successor is appointed.
5 Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original
6 appointments.

7 (c) Duties.--The committee shall perform the following
8 duties:

9 (1) Convene an annual meeting of providers participating
10 under this act.

11 (2) Report to the secretary on the results of the
12 meeting.

13 (3) Aid the secretary in designing program standards and
14 eligibility requirements.

15 (d) Compensation.--No member of the committee shall be
16 compensated except for reimbursement of expenditures incurred in
17 performance of duties.

18 Section 8. Annual reports.

19 The department shall report annually to the Governor and the
20 General Assembly regarding its activities under this act. The
21 report shall include:

22 (1) The activities and expenditures of the department
23 under this act.

24 (2) The activities of recipients of grants under this
25 act.

26 (3) The number of people served.

27 (4) The number of people denied grants under this act.

28 (5) The recommendations in summary form made from the
29 annual meeting of the advisory committee.

30 (6) The recommendations of the secretary.

1 ~~Section 9. Appropriations.~~

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2 ~~The sum of \$10,000,000 is hereby appropriated from the~~
3 ~~General Fund to the Department of Public Welfare for fiscal year~~
4 ~~2001-2002 for the establishment of the People Improving Lots of~~
5 ~~Lives for Pennsylvania's Health Grant Program.~~

6 Section ~~10~~ 9. Effective date.

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7 This act shall take effect in 60 days.