
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 424 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, RYAN, STAATS, T. DAVIS, KINSEY, MILLARD,
MURT, TOEPEL, BOBACK, HILL-EVANS, SAYLOR, KAUFER, SIMMONS,
KORTZ AND MASSER, MARCH 1, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MARCH 1, 2019

AN ACT

1 Providing for the warm hand-off of overdose survivors to
2 addiction treatment, for a comprehensive warm hand-off
3 initiative; establishing the Warm Hand-Off Initiative Grant
4 Program; providing for consents and for immunity;
5 establishing the Overdose Recovery Task Force; and providing
6 for overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers, for
7 rules and regulations and for annual reports.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. Short title.

11 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Warm Hand-Off
12 to Treatment Act.

13 Section 2. Legislative findings.

14 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

15 (1) In 2017, 72,000 Americans died of drug overdoses,
16 quadrupling the number of fatal overdoses that occurred in
17 the year 2000 and making today's opioid epidemic the worst
18 epidemic in 100 years.

19 (2) This Commonwealth had approximately 5,460 overdose
20 deaths in 2017, more than any other state.

1 (3) First responders, including emergency medical
2 services providers, firefighters, law enforcement officers,
3 social workers, members of the recovery community and family
4 members, have heroically escalated their lifesaving overdose
5 reversal efforts, all resulting in many more lives saved and
6 many more overdose survivors entering the emergency health
7 care systems.

8 (4) First responders are reporting that many whose
9 overdoses are reversed are overdosing repeatedly, indicating
10 that most overdose survivors are not being successfully
11 transitioned to treatment and recovery support services,
12 placing themselves at grave risk of death, and causing
13 extraordinary strain and suffering to their families and
14 communities, including first responder and health care system
15 services.

16 (5) It is urgent that every effort be made to
17 successfully transition overdose survivors to treatment and
18 recovery support services, based on an individualized
19 assessment and application of clinical placement criteria.

20 Section 3. Purpose.

21 The purpose of this act is to:

22 (1) Ensure that effective practices are used by
23 emergency medical services providers so that overdose victims
24 are medically stabilized.

25 (2) Ensure that emergency medical services protocols are
26 used by emergency medical services providers and emergency
27 departments so that stabilized overdose survivors are
28 successfully transferred to appropriate treatment and
29 recovery support services, as determined by an individualized
30 treatment plan based on an assessment and clinical placement

1 criteria.

2 (3) Ensure that the Commonwealth works with all relevant
3 stakeholders to develop a network of overdose stabilization
4 and warm hand-off centers where emergency medical service
5 providers can directly transport overdose survivors for
6 medical stabilization, detoxification, assessment, referral
7 and direct placement to individualized treatment and recovery
8 support services.

9 (4) Ensure that the Commonwealth works with all relevant
10 stakeholders to ensure that the full continuum of addiction
11 treatment and recovery support services are available and
12 coordinated in order to facilitate each overdose survivor's
13 long-term individual process of recovery.

14 (5) Ensure that the Commonwealth has the necessary
15 treatment and recovery support capacity to address the need
16 for all of the overdose survivors.

17 Section 4. Definitions.

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

21 "Department." The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs of
22 the Commonwealth.

23 "Detoxification facility." A facility licensed by the
24 department to engage in the process whereby an alcohol-
25 intoxicated, drug-intoxicated, alcohol-dependent or drug-
26 dependent individual is assisted through the period of time to
27 eliminate, by metabolic or other means, the intoxicating alcohol
28 or other drugs, alcohol and other drug dependency factors or
29 alcohol in combination with drugs as determined by a licensed
30 physician, while keeping the physiological risk to the patient

1 at a minimum.

2 "Drug." The following:

3 (1) An article recognized in the official United States
4 Pharmacopeia, official Homeopathic Pharmacopeia of the United
5 States, official National Formulary or any supplement of
6 those publications.

7 (2) An article intended for use in the diagnosis, cure,
8 mitigation, treatment or prevention of disease in humans or
9 animals.

10 (3) An article, other than food, intended to affect the
11 structure or any function of the body of a human or animal.

12 (4) An article intended for use as a component of any
13 article specified in paragraph (1), (2) or (3). The term does
14 not include devices or their components, parts or
15 accessories.

16 "Emergency department." A hospital emergency department, a
17 free-standing emergency department or a health clinic where the
18 clinic carries out emergency department functions.

19 "Emergency department personnel." A physician, physician's
20 assistant, nurse, paramedic, medical assistant, nurse aide and
21 other health care professional working in an emergency
22 department.

23 "Emergency medical services agency." As defined in 35
24 Pa.C.S. § 8103 (relating to definitions).

25 "Emergency medical services provider." As defined in 35
26 Pa.C.S. § 8103.

27 "Harm reduction services." A range of public health policies
28 designed to lessen the negative social and physical consequences
29 associated with substance use, both legal and illegal, while
30 engaging an individual to seek further assistance for a

1 substance use disorder.

2 "Intervention services." Services provided by an individual
3 with training and knowledge about the system of substance use
4 disorder treatment options available in the local community and
5 who has specific expertise in interventions with overdose
6 survivors through a process where the substance user is
7 encouraged to accept help.

8 "Overdose." Injury to the body that happens when a drug is
9 taken in excessive amounts, which can be fatal or nonfatal.

10 "Peer specialist." An individual certified as a peer
11 specialist by a Statewide certification body which is a member
12 of a national certification body or an individual who is
13 certified by another state's substance abuse counseling
14 certification board.

15 "Recovery support services." Informational, emotional and
16 intentional support, including, but not limited to:

17 (1) Developing a one-on-one relationship in which a peer
18 specialist encourages, motivates and supports a peer in
19 recovery.

20 (2) Connecting the peer with professional and
21 nonprofessional services and resources available in the
22 community.

23 (3) Facilitating or leading recovery-oriented group
24 activities, including support groups and educational
25 activities.

26 (4) Helping the peer make new friends and build healthy
27 social networks through emotional, instrumental,
28 informational and affiliation types of peer support.

29 "Substance use disorder treatment provider." A substance use
30 disorder facility or treatment program that is licensed by the

1 Commonwealth to provide comprehensive alcohol or other drug
2 addiction treatment and recovery support services, with or
3 without the support of addiction medications, on a hospital,
4 nonhospital residential or outpatient basis. The term shall
5 include a physician with expertise in providing or coordinating
6 access to comprehensive detoxification, medication, treatment
7 and long-term recovery support services.

8 "Task force." The Overdose Recovery Task Force established
9 under section 8.

10 "Treatment." Substance use disorder treatment for alcohol or
11 other drug addiction with a substance use disorder treatment
12 provider in accordance with an individualized assessment and
13 clinical placement criteria.

14 "Warm hand-off." The direct referral and transfer of an
15 overdose survivor immediately after medical stabilization to:

16 (1) a licensed detoxification facility or other medical
17 facility for detoxification; or

18 (2) to a substance use disorder treatment provider, with
19 treatment matched to the individual's clinical needs, based
20 on a biopsychosocial assessment and application of clinical
21 placement criteria and coordinated with recovery support
22 services. The term shall also include face-to-face or other
23 follow-up contact with recent overdose survivors by first
24 responders and individuals providing intervention services to
25 encourage entry into treatment and the provision of harm
26 reduction services to overdose survivors who persistently
27 refuse referral and transfer to a detoxification facility for
28 treatment.

29 Section 5. Comprehensive warm hand-off initiative.

30 (a) Development.--The department shall collaborate with the

1 Department of Health and other appropriate State and local
2 agencies to develop a warm hand-off initiative to medically
3 stabilize overdose survivors and directly transfer the overdose
4 survivors to a detoxification facility, or other medical
5 facility, for detoxification or to a substance use disorder
6 treatment provider for recovery support services and a course of
7 treatment and recovery support, in accordance with an
8 individualized assessment and application of clinical placement
9 criteria. Services provided by the warm hand-off initiative
10 shall also be available to any other individual seeking
11 treatment for a substance use disorder. The warm hand-off
12 initiative shall be developed within one year of the effective
13 date of this section and shall include, but not be limited to,
14 the following:

15 (1) Partnerships between the department, county drug and
16 alcohol administrators and emergency departments as follows:

17 (i) The department shall direct county drug and
18 alcohol administrators to establish partnerships with all
19 emergency departments in their respective localities and
20 to assist those emergency departments to implement warm
21 hand-off procedures for overdose survivors. Assistance
22 may include, but not be limited to, working with
23 emergency departments to ensure that intervention
24 services are available in a timely fashion.

25 (ii) Owners and operators of emergency departments
26 shall take reasonable steps to train and credential any
27 individuals providing intervention services, using the
28 emergency department's established credentialing process
29 for staff and vendors providing care, in order to
30 facilitate unhindered communication between the

1 individual providing intervention services and the
2 overdose survivor.

3 (iii) County drug and alcohol administrators shall
4 regularly assess the network of available detoxification
5 facilities, medical facilities providing detoxification
6 services, substance use treatment providers and recovery
7 support services and communicate the findings of the
8 assessment to all individuals providing intervention
9 services for overdose survivors, so that a backlog of
10 referrals does not occur.

11 (iv) County drug and alcohol administrators shall
12 regularly assess the network of services that address the
13 needs of individuals in recovery and the families of
14 overdose survivors and shall work with emergency
15 departments to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in
16 place to connect those families to needed services.

17 (2) Prioritizing overdose survivors for substance use
18 disorder treatment as follows:

19 (i) The department shall direct county drug and
20 alcohol administrators to include overdose survivors as
21 one of the department's prioritized populations for
22 Federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block
23 Grant (SABG) funding, in accordance with individualized
24 assessments and clinical placement criteria.

25 (ii) The department shall work with county drug and
26 alcohol administrators, emergency medical services
27 providers, substance use disorder treatment providers and
28 the recovery support services community to gather the
29 following data, which shall be included in the patient
30 care reports and shall be published and annually updated

1 on the department's publicly accessible Internet website:

2 (A) The number of individuals treated by
3 emergency medical services providers for overdoses.

4 (B) Levels of care and lengths of stay of
5 overdose survivors in Medicaid facilities and Federal
6 SABG-funded treatment provider facilities.

7 (C) The number of Medicaid-funded and Federal
8 SABG-funded overdose survivors in treatment who
9 received a lower level of care or shorter length of
10 stay than determined necessary by the physician or
11 the treatment provider using the required placement
12 criteria.

13 (D) Of the individuals identified in clause (C),
14 the number who received a lower level of care or
15 shorter length of stay in treatment than determined
16 necessary due to lack of funding, patients leaving
17 against medical advice and any other reasons
18 identified by the department.

19 (E) Any other trends or observations deemed
20 significant by the department, county drug and
21 alcohol administrators, emergency medical services
22 providers, substance use disorder treatment providers
23 or the recovery support services community which may
24 include possible correlation in variations of the
25 level of care and lengths of stay in treatment, with
26 geographic region, behavioral health managed care
27 organization, treatment program and other factors
28 considered.

29 (3) Training in effective warm hand-off protocols for
30 emergency medical services providers as follows:

1 (i) The Department of Health, in collaboration with
2 the department, shall develop warm hand-off emergency
3 medical service training curriculum for emergency medical
4 services providers addressing the most effective
5 protocols to successfully transport overdose survivors to
6 emergency departments for medical stabilization or, where
7 available, to overdose stabilization and warm hand-off
8 centers created under section 8.

9 (ii) The Department of Health, in collaboration with
10 the department and individuals from the recovery support
11 services community, shall develop a training curriculum
12 for emergency medical services providers that addresses:

13 (A) The elements of addiction, stigma, treatment
14 referral, recommended safety procedures to limit
15 first responder exposure to the drugs involved and
16 effective strategies for immediate and expeditious
17 transport of the overdose survivor after
18 administration of an opioid overdose reversal drug in
19 order to maximize the likelihood of successful
20 transport of patients.

21 (B) The necessary skills to determine when it is
22 appropriate to directly transfer an overdose survivor
23 to an overdose stabilization and warm hand-off
24 center, but only if the emergency medical services
25 providers subject to the training are authorized and
26 directed by protocol developed under this act to
27 directly transport certain medically stabilized
28 overdose survivors to an overdose stabilization and
29 warm hand-off center without transportation to an
30 emergency department.

1 (C) Effective protocols and skills for
2 participating in face-to-face or other follow-up
3 contact with recent overdose survivors to encourage
4 and facilitate entry into treatment, including
5 alliances with recovery support services for the
6 follow-up contacts, to successfully engage overdose
7 survivors.

8 (iii) The curriculum developed under subparagraphs
9 (i) and (ii) shall be in compliance with the standards of
10 the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital
11 Continuing Education and be approved by the department
12 and the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services of the
13 Department of Health. The training shall be mandatory for
14 all emergency medical services providers and, in
15 accordance with standards provided by the Department of
16 Health in consultation with the department, shall require
17 competency assurance of the necessary cognitive,
18 psychomotor and affective skills upon completion of the
19 program of instruction, as a condition of licensure
20 renewal.

21 (4) Training in substance use disorders, intervention
22 and referral to treatment for emergency department personnel
23 as follows:

24 (i) The Department of Health, in collaboration with
25 the department and individuals from the recovery support
26 services community, shall promulgate a training
27 curriculum in the effective warm hand-off to treatment of
28 drug overdose survivors which shall address the basic
29 elements of addiction, stigma, referral to treatment,
30 recovery support services, the recovery community and

1 effective strategies for interacting with the recently
2 reversed overdose survivor to maximize the likelihood
3 that there will be a successful and immediate warm hand-
4 off to treatment. The curriculum shall also include harm
5 reduction services for individuals who decline treatment.
6 Ongoing emphasis on engagement in treatment shall be a
7 required element of harm reduction services.

8 (ii) The curriculum shall be approved by the
9 department and the Department of Health. The training
10 shall be mandatory for all emergency department personnel
11 and, in accordance with the standards provided by the
12 Department of Health in consultation with the department,
13 shall require competency assurance of the necessary
14 cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills upon
15 completion of the program of instruction as a condition
16 of licensure renewal. The training may satisfy the
17 emergency department personnel's patient safety
18 continuing medical education requirements. The providers
19 of the training shall include individuals who are in
20 recovery.

21 (b) Warm Hand-Off Initiative Grant Program.--The following
22 shall apply:

23 (1) The Warm Hand-Off Initiative Grant Program is
24 established and shall be administered by the department.
25 Grants provided under the program shall be used to
26 incentivize the development of successful warm hand-off
27 programs and operations established under this act. Awards
28 shall be granted with highest priority to overdose
29 stabilization centers that:

30 (i) Are licensed by the department as a

1 detoxification facility.

2 (ii) Have properly credentialed staff that are
3 experienced in substance use disorder assessments,
4 including the use of the Pennsylvania Client Placement
5 Criteria.

6 (iii) Offer therapeutic engagement with overdose
7 survivors.

8 (iv) Are connected with a network of treatment
9 providers for all modalities and levels of care to which
10 patients may be transferred.

11 (v) Have medical staff with expertise in overdose
12 stabilization for all commonly misused drugs.

13 (2) The department shall transmit notice of the grant
14 program availability to the Legislative Reference Bureau for
15 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin by December 1, 2019,
16 for the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2020.

17 (3) The department may award grants from the Warm Hand-
18 Off Initiative Grant Program for the following:

19 (i) To emergency departments, for one or more of the
20 following:

21 (A) Implementing warm hand-off procedures for
22 overdose survivors, as described under subsection (a)
23 (1).

24 (B) Training and credentialing individuals
25 providing intervention services, as described under
26 subsection (a)(1).

27 (C) Training emergency department personnel in
28 substance use disorders, intervention and referral to
29 treatment, as described under subsection (a)(4).

30 (ii) To emergency medical services providers, for

1 the purpose of training emergency medical service
2 personnel in effective warm hand-off protocols, as
3 described under subsection (a) (3).

4 (iii) To county drug and alcohol administrators, for
5 the purpose of assisting in the assessment of the network
6 of available detoxification facilities, medical
7 facilities providing detoxification services, substance
8 use treatment providers and recovery support services and
9 communicating the findings of the assessment to all
10 individuals providing intervention services for overdose
11 survivors, as described under subsection (a) (1).

12 (4) The following limits on grants shall apply:

13 (i) Grants shall be not less than \$25,000 per award.

14 (ii) Only one grant shall be awarded per county in
15 this Commonwealth.

16 (iii) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if
17 the total dollar amount of the approved application
18 exceeds the amount of funds appropriated by the General
19 Assembly for this purpose.

20 (5) Time for filing an application and department action
21 is as follows:

22 (i) By September 1, 2020, and each year thereafter,
23 the department shall provide written instructions for
24 grants under this section to all county drug and alcohol
25 administrators and to the president of every emergency
26 department and emergency medical service provider in this
27 Commonwealth.

28 (ii) By September 8, 2020, and each year thereafter,
29 the department shall provide applications for grants to
30 the individuals specified in paragraph (1).

1 (iii) Emergency departments, emergency medical
2 services providers and county drug and alcohol
3 administrators seeking grants under this section shall
4 submit a completed application to the department in order
5 to be eligible for an award.

6 (iv) The application period shall remain open for 45
7 days each year. The department shall act to approve or
8 disapprove applications within 60 days of the application
9 submission deadline each year. Applications that have not
10 been approved or disapproved by the department within 60
11 days after the close of the application period each year
12 shall be deemed approved.

13 (6) The department may receive gifts, grants and
14 endowments from public or private sources as may be made from
15 time to time, in trust and otherwise, for the use and benefit
16 of the purposes of the Warm Hand-Off initiative Grant Program
17 and expand the same or any income derived from it according
18 to the term of the gifts, grants or endowments. In addition,
19 the department shall aggressively pursue all Federal funding,
20 matching funds and foundation funding for the Warm Hand-Off
21 Initiative Grant Program. The money received under this
22 paragraph shall be deposited into a restricted account in the
23 State Treasury. Money in the restricted account shall be
24 appropriated to the department on a continuing basis.

25 (c) Emergency department implementation.--The following
26 shall apply:

27 (1) Within six months of the effective date of this act,
28 the Department of Health shall require, as a condition of
29 licensure for the owner or operation of an emergency
30 department, a written report from each emergency department

1 that meets the standards required under this act, which shall
2 include, but not be limited to:

3 (i) A description of the emergency department's warm
4 hand-off procedures.

5 (ii) Certification from the county drug and alcohol
6 administrator of the emergency department's partnership
7 with the county drug and alcohol administrator to attain
8 the most effective possible warm hand-off outcomes.

9 (iii) The number of overdose patients:

10 (A) Treated in the emergency department.

11 (B) Screened to be in need of treatment.

12 (C) Successfully transferred to treatment.

13 (D) Refusing treatment and the reasons given.

14 (E) Who return to the emergency department on a
15 subsequent occasion.

16 (iv) The emergency department's action plan to
17 continue to improve warm hand-off outcomes.

18 (v) Results of monitoring staff sensitivity,
19 antistigma and antidiscrimination efforts within the
20 emergency department, including an action plan to address
21 staff training and sensitivity needs.

22 (2) The reporting under this subsection shall be
23 required annually for five years following the effective date
24 of this section and biannually thereafter.

25 (3) The department and the Department of Health shall
26 develop and publish minimum warm hand-off protocol and
27 reporting requirements for emergency departments.

28 (d) Eligibility to be a provider and coverage for warm hand-
29 off initiative.--The following shall apply:

30 (1) The Department of Human Services shall require

1 emergency medical services providers with patient transport
2 capability, emergency departments and personnel working
3 within each of those entities to demonstrate compliance with
4 the requirements of subsections (a) (3) and (4) and (c) in
5 order to be eligible to be a participating provider in the
6 Medicaid network.

7 (2) The Department of Human Services shall establish and
8 provide reasonable and fair reimbursement rates approved by
9 the department for the services provided for under this act.
10 The rates shall include, but not be limited to, full and fair
11 reimbursement for:

12 (i) An emergency medical services provider
13 successfully transporting overdose victims for medical
14 stabilization at an emergency department or an overdose
15 stabilization and warm hand-off center.

16 (ii) An emergency medical services provider
17 successfully medically stabilizing an overdose survivor
18 and successfully transporting the individual to a
19 detoxification facility or overdose stabilization and
20 warm hand-off center.

21 (iii) Follow-up contact with recent overdose
22 survivors by an emergency medical services provider or
23 others engaging in intervention services to encourage and
24 facilitate entry into treatment.

25 (iv) Intervention services and warm hand-off
26 services.

27 (v) Case management providing support, guidance and
28 navigation of the treatment and recovery systems.

29 (3) The reimbursement rates shall take into account the
30 providers' costs in meeting the training, data reporting and

1 other requirements of this act and shall be designed to
2 incentivize and reward positive outcomes for successful
3 medical stabilization of overdose victims and successful
4 assessment and transfer of the overdose victims to clinically
5 appropriate detoxification and treatment programs.

6 (e) Private health insurance coverage for warm hand-off
7 initiative.--The following shall apply:

8 (1) The Insurance Department, in consultation with the
9 department, shall require all health insurers providing
10 coverage in this Commonwealth to establish and provide
11 reasonable and fair reimbursement rates. The rates shall
12 include, but not be limited to, full and fair reimbursement
13 for:

14 (i) An emergency medical services provider
15 successfully transporting overdose victims for medical
16 stabilization at an emergency department or an overdose
17 stabilization and warm hand-off center.

18 (ii) An emergency medical services provider
19 successfully medically stabilizing an overdose survivor
20 and successfully transporting the individual to a
21 detoxification facility or overdose stabilization and
22 warm hand-off center.

23 (iii) Follow-up contact with recent overdose
24 survivors by an emergency medical services provider or
25 intervention specialists to encourage and facilitate
26 entry into treatment.

27 (iv) Intervention and warm hand-off services.

28 (v) Case management providing support, guidance and
29 navigation of the treatment and recovery systems.

30 (2) The reimbursement rates shall take into account the

1 providers' costs in meeting the training, data reporting and
2 other requirements of this act, and shall be designed to
3 incentivize and reward positive outcomes for successful
4 medical stabilization of overdose victims and successful
5 assessment and transfer of these overdose victims to
6 clinically appropriate detoxification and treatment programs.

7 (3) The Insurance Department shall require all health
8 insurers providing coverage in this Commonwealth to eliminate
9 preauthorization requirements for treatment in instances
10 where an overdose survivor is transported to treatment under
11 this act.

12 Section 6. Consents.

13 (a) General rule.--The attending physician in an emergency
14 department, or a physician's designee, shall make reasonable
15 efforts to obtain a patient's signed consent to disclose
16 information about the patient's drug overdose to family members
17 or others involved in the patient's health care.

18 (b) Exception.--If the consent cannot practicably be
19 provided because of the patient's incapacity or a serious and
20 imminent threat to a patient's health or safety, the physician,
21 or physician's designee, may disclose information about a
22 patient's drug overdose in compliance with applicable privacy
23 and confidentiality laws and regulations, including:

24 (1) The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability
25 Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936).

26 (2) 42 CFR Pt. 2 (relating to confidentiality of
27 substance use disorder patient records).

28 (3) 45 CFR Pt. 160 (relating to general administrative
29 requirements).

30 (4) 45 CFR Pt. 164 (relating to security and privacy).

1 (5) 42 U.S.C. § 290dd-2 (relating to confidentiality of
2 records).

3 (6) Any relevant State law related to the privacy,
4 confidentially and disclosure of protected health
5 information.

6 (7) Any policies or regulations of the department
7 governing the care of and protection of client information.

8 Section 7. Immunity.

9 (a) Emergency medical services agencies and providers.--
10 Absent evidence of a malicious intent to cause harm, no
11 emergency medical services agency or emergency medical services
12 provider may be held liable for medically stabilizing, or
13 attempting to medically stabilize, an overdose victim or for
14 transporting or attempting to transport an overdose victim for
15 medical stabilization.

16 (b) Emergency department personnel.--Absent evidence of a
17 malicious intent to cause harm, no emergency department
18 personnel providing intervention services or recovery support
19 services may be held liable for their efforts to have overdose
20 survivors properly assessed and directly transferred to a
21 clinically appropriate detoxification facility, to treatment or
22 to recovery support services.

23 Section 8. Overdose Recovery Task Force and overdose
24 stabilization and warm hand-off centers.

25 (a) Establishment.--The Overdose Recovery Task Force is
26 established. The task force shall consist of the following
27 members:

28 (1) The Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs or a
29 designee.

30 (2) The Secretary of Health or a designee.

1 (3) The Secretary of Human Services or a designee.

2 (4) The Secretary of Corrections or a designee.

3 (5) A representative from the following professional
4 associations in this Commonwealth:

5 (i) Law enforcement.

6 (ii) Fire departments.

7 (iii) Emergency medical services.

8 (iv) Behavioral health providers.

9 (v) Hospital administration.

10 (vi) Addiction treatment providers.

11 (vii) Peer specialists.

12 (viii) Recovery organizations.

13 (6) An individual who is in recovery.

14 (b) Purpose.--

15 (1) The initial purpose of the task force shall be to
16 develop and implement overdose stabilization and warm hand-
17 off centers. Overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers
18 shall be staffed locations that can medically oversee the
19 stabilization of overdose survivors, begin detoxification,
20 engage survivors with intervention specialists, complete full
21 addiction assessment and referral and connect survivors to
22 all modalities and levels of treatment, depending on the
23 survivor's individual clinical needs.

24 (2) Overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers
25 shall address the needs of survivors' families and utilize
26 them in the engagement and treatment of the survivors, as
27 appropriate.

28 (c) Expansion of current services.--The task force may
29 explore mechanisms to expand, where feasible, the function of
30 currently existing crisis health care facilities so that they

1 can serve as overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers,
2 in addition to their current functions.

3 (d) Development of overdose stabilization and warm hand-off
4 centers.--The development and implementation of overdose
5 stabilization and warm hand-off centers undertaken by the task
6 force shall include:

7 (1) Identifying the areas that will benefit most from
8 the placement of overdose stabilization and warm hand-off
9 centers through an analysis of population density and number
10 of overdose deaths.

11 (2) Creating the design, staffing structure and
12 operational protocols of the overdose stabilization and warm
13 hand-off centers, which may include consideration of existing
14 detoxification facilities with expanded capacity and
15 functions.

16 (3) Expanding the functions of currently existing crisis
17 health care facilities so that they can also serve as
18 overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers.

19 (4) Identifying funding sources for overdose
20 stabilization and warm hand-off centers.

21 (5) Establishing a new licensing category to cover the
22 overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers.

23 (e) Requirements.--The operations of each overdose
24 stabilization and warm hand-off center shall include, at a
25 minimum, the following:

26 (1) The capacity to safely medically stabilize and
27 manage the chronic non-life threatening medical needs of
28 overdose survivors.

29 (2) The ability to identify overdose survivors whose
30 medical situations are sufficiently complex to require

1 immediate transportation to an emergency department, based
2 upon developed protocols.

3 (3) State licensure as a medical, nonhospital
4 residential or hospital detoxification facility.

5 (4) Intervention services conducted by staff with
6 specific expertise in therapeutically engaging individuals
7 who have just survived an overdose.

8 (5) Treatment assessments with physicians or other
9 clinicians with certified expertise in undertaking drug and
10 alcohol assessments and applying appropriate clinical
11 placement criteria.

12 (6) Working relationships with treatment programs of all
13 modalities, including programs that provide family
14 preservation services, in the reasonable vicinity of the
15 overdose stabilization and warm hand-off center.

16 (7) Development of protocols and referral agreements to
17 govern the transfer of patients to and from emergency
18 departments and treatment programs.

19 (8) Access to direct transportation from the overdose
20 stabilization and warm hand-off center to treatment programs.

21 (f) Evaluation.--The task force shall periodically evaluate
22 the performance and effectiveness of the overdose stabilization
23 and warm hand-off centers and gather and make recommendations
24 for continuous quality improvements.

25 (g) Application.--Sections 6 and 7(b) shall apply to
26 overdose stabilization and warm hand-off centers developed under
27 this section.

28 Section 9. Rules and regulations.

29 The department, Department of Health and Department of Human
30 Services shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to

1 implement their responsibilities under this act.

2 Section 10. Annual report.

3 (a) General rule.--The department, in consultation with the
4 Department of Health, shall provide an annual report to the
5 General Assembly documenting the following:

6 (1) Compliance with the requirements of this act.

7 (2) The number of overdose survivors successfully being
8 transferred to and engaged in treatment.

9 (3) The number of warm hand-off centers in operation.

10 (4) The total number of overdose victims each warm hand-
11 off center has received.

12 (5) The total amount of funds awarded from the Warm
13 Hand-Off Initiative Grant Program in the previous year and
14 the amount each grantee received.

15 (b) Publication.--The annual report shall be published on
16 the publicly accessible Internet websites of the department and
17 the Department of Health.

18 Section 11. Severability.

19 The provisions of this act are severable. If any provision of
20 this act or application of this act to any individual or
21 circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect
22 other provisions or applications of this act which can be given
23 effect without the invalid provisions or applications.

24 Section 12. Effective date.

25 This act shall take effect in 60 days.