

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 179 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY BARTOLOTTA, VOGEL, YAW, BREWSTER, RESCHENTHALER,
YUDICHAK, HAYWOOD, VULAKOVICH, SCHWANK, RAFFERTY, COSTA,
SCARNATI AND WARD, JANUARY 25, 2017

REFERRED TO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, JANUARY 25, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), entitled "An
2 act relating to health care; prescribing the powers and
3 duties of the Department of Health; establishing and
4 providing the powers and duties of the State Health
5 Coordinating Council, health systems agencies and Health Care
6 Policy Board in the Department of Health, and State Health
7 Facility Hearing Board in the Department of Justice;
8 providing for certification of need of health care providers
9 and prescribing penalties," in general provisions, providing
10 for acute care mental health bed registry and referrals.

11 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
12 hereby enacts as follows:

13 Section 1. The act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known
14 as the Health Care Facilities Act, is amended by adding a
15 section to read:

16 Section 901.1. Acute care mental health bed registry and
17 referrals.

18 (a) The department shall develop and administer an Internet
19 web-based acute care mental health bed registry to facilitate
20 the temporary hospitalization and treatment of individuals who
21 meet the criteria for inpatient examination and treatment under

1 Article II or III of the act of July 9, 1976 (P.L.817, No.143),
2 known as the "Mental Health Procedures Act." The department
3 shall make the registry available to health care professionals
4 and their designees who are treating patients in need of mental
5 health inpatient examination and treatment.

6 (b) The department shall design the registry to collect,
7 aggregate and display the information under subsection (c).

8 (c) The registry shall include all of the following
9 information:

10 (1) General descriptive information for each
11 participating facility, including contact information and the
12 type of treatment and services available at each
13 participating facility.

14 (2) Real-time information, updated at least daily, on
15 the number of acute care mental health beds available at the
16 participating facility.

17 (3) For each available acute care mental health bed at a
18 participating facility, the type of patient that may be
19 admitted.

20 (4) The level of security provided at each participating
21 facility.

22 (5) Any other information that may assist a health care
23 professional in identifying an appropriate acute care mental
24 health bed for an individual in need of inpatient examination
25 and treatment.

26 (d) The department shall design the registry to allow
27 health care professionals and their designees to search the
28 registry for an appropriate acute care mental health bed for an
29 individual in need of inpatient examination or treatment.

30 (e) In order to be eligible to access the registry, a

1 facility must:

2 (1) submit information specified under subsection (c) to
3 the department for inclusion in the registry, including
4 providing daily real-time information under subsection (c);
5 and

6 (2) arrange for the facility's contact information to be
7 monitored and accessed at any time in accordance with the
8 department's regulations promulgated under subsection (h).

9 (f) The department may contract with a third party to
10 develop and administer the registry.

11 (g) The department shall publish a notice in the
12 Pennsylvania Bulletin providing for the date when the department
13 completed the development of the registry.

14 (h) The department shall promulgate regulations necessary to
15 implement this section.

16 (i) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
17 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection:

18 "Acute care mental health bed." A bed located at a mental
19 health facility that provides acute care mental health services.

20 "Facility." A mental health facility.

21 "Health care professional." An individual licensed as a
22 physician, osteopath, physician assistant or certified
23 registered nurse practitioner.

24 "Mental health facility." A distinct part unit of a general
25 hospital licensed by the department under this act or a facility
26 that exclusively cares for the mentally ill and is licensed by
27 the Department of Human Services under the "Mental Health
28 Procedures Act" and Article X of the act of June 13, 1967
29 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the "Human Services Code," that
30 provides inpatient mental health examination and treatment. The

1 term shall not include the emergency department of a general
2 hospital.

3 Section 2. This act shall take effect as follows:

4 (1) The following shall take effect immediately:

5 (i) The addition of section 901.1(g) of the act.

6 (ii) This section.

7 (2) The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days
8 after the date of the publication of the notice under section
9 901.1(g) of the act.