

SUBJECT: Coordinating state policies on inpatient mental health facilities

COMMITTEE: Public Health — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 7 ayes — Berlanga, Hirschi, Coleman, Davila, Delisi, Glaze, Maxey
0 nays
2 absent — Janek, Rodriguez

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, Local and Uncontested Calendar, February 26 — 31-0

WITNESSES: For — Matthew T. Wall, Texas Hospital Association, Psychiatric and Chemical Dependency Services Hospitals Council
Against — None
On — L. Jann Melton-Kissel

BACKGROUND : The Texas Department of Health (TDH) licenses and regulates hospitals, and enforces regulations developed by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) on the provision of psychiatric services in free-standing psychiatric hospitals or wings of acute care hospitals providing such services.

DIGEST: CSSB 434 would require the TDH and MHMR to coordinate activities on developing and enforcing policies and rules relating to mental health services in TDH-licensed inpatient facilities. The Health and Human Services Commission would have to review these activities to ensure compliance by the agencies.

The bill also would require the Texas MHMR Board to appoint an advisory committee on inpatient mental health services to advise it on issues and policies related to mental health services provided in TDH-licensed inpatient facilities; coordination among MHMR, TDH and those facilities to address consistency in interpreting and enforcing agency policies and rules; and training for inpatient mental health facility surveyors or investigators.

The committee would be composed of three representatives of hospitals, three consumers of mental health services, two licensed and practicing physicians board-certified in psychiatry, and one family member of a mental health services consumer.

Committee members would serve staggered four-year terms. The committee would have to meet at least four times a year and would be abolished on September 1, 2001, unless the MHMR adopted an order continuing its existence.

The Texas Board of Health would provide the advisory committee with two representatives who could address the committee on any issue relevant to a matter before it, but could not vote.

CSSB 434 would take effect September 1, 1997.

NOTES:

The committee substitute changed the caption; required that the Health and Human Services Commission ensure, rather than determine, compliance by TDH and MHMR; specified the advisory committee's duties; and revised the committee's composition and term limitations.