

ECR Legislative Newsletter

March 24, 2022 | Issue No. 6

Second Funnel Week Produces Positive Steps for ECR Bills

The second funnel in the legislative session was completed on March 18th. Several important bills that the ECR is supporting did pass ‘through the funnel’ and will continue on for more discussion and debate, and hopefully, to be voted into law by the end of the session.

Additionally, the five bills below have been assigned to either Ways and Means or Appropriations, which protect them from the funnel deadlines.

Senate File 2314 - 10% Carry Forward

This bill increases the amount of money a mental health and disability services (MHDS) regional combined account may have before payments to the MHDS region are reduced and an MHDS region is disqualified from receiving funding from an MHDS incentive fund. The bill provides that, for fiscal years beginning on or after July 1, 2023, an MHDS region’s cash reserves cannot exceed 10 percent of the actual expenditures from the combined account for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year in progress. Under current law, for fiscal years beginning on or after July 1, 2023, an MHDS region’s cash reserves cannot exceed 5 percent of the actual expenditures from the combined account for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year in progress.

(This bill is directly related to our third legislative priority: “Allow the MH/DS Regions to sustain a fund balance of 10% for FY24 and beyond.”)

House File 2549 – Mental Health Practitioner Loan Repayments

This bill establishes a mental health practitioner loan repayment program. The bill requires the Iowa Student Aid Commission to establish a mental health practitioner loan repayment program for the purposes of providing loan repayments for mental health practitioners who agree to practice in service commitment areas for at least five years and meet the requirements of the bill. “Mental health practitioner” means a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a mental health professional, a physician assistant practicing under the supervision of a psychiatrist, or a psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner. Under this bill, the qualifying practitioners will be eligible for varying amounts of loan forgiveness.

(This bill is directly related to our first legislative priority: “Reduce barriers to availability of Direct Support Professionals and other mental health professionals.”)



Providing services for 9 Iowa counties:

Benton, Bremer, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn

House File 2529 - Psychiatric Residencies

This bill requires the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC) to administer a state-funded psychiatric residency program in cooperation with the state mental health institutes at Independence and Cherokee and the Iowa Medical and Classification Center at Oakdale. The UIHC shall expand the psychiatric residency program to provide additional residency positions in excess of those approved under the federal residency cap.

Participating residents shall complete the majority of their psychiatric training at one of the state mental health institutes or the Iowa Medical and Classification Center at Oakdale. The program shall award 12 additional residency positions for each class of residents and preference in the awarding of residency positions shall be given to candidates who are residents of Iowa, attended and earned an undergraduate degree from an Iowa college or university, or attended and earned a medical degree from a medical school in Iowa.

(This bill is directly related to our first legislative priority: “Reduce barriers to availability of Direct Support Professionals and other mental health professionals.”)

House File 2546 - Tiered rates

This bill requires The Department of Human Services, no later than January 1, 2023, to implement a tiered rate reimbursement methodology for psychiatric intensive inpatient care under the Medicaid program based on the level of patient acuity and other factors as recommended in the inpatient bed tracking study committee report submitted to the governor and the general assembly on December 1, 2021.

(This bill is directly related to second legislative priority: “Direct the state’s managed care organizations to develop more sustainable rates, a more streamlined billing process, and quicker certification of providers.”)

HF2554 - Medicaid funding for Functional Family Therapy and Multisystemic Therapy

This bill requires the Department of Human Services to submit a Medicaid state plan amendment to include functional family therapy (FFT) and multisystemic therapy (MST) for youth as covered services under the Medicaid program. Both FFT and MST are evidence-based treatments for youth that address a youth’s home and environment to reduce problematic behavior and divert the youth from the juvenile justice system.

(This bill is directly related to second legislative priority: “Direct the state’s managed care organizations to develop more sustainable rates, a more streamlined billing process, and quicker certification of providers.”)