

# Assembly Bill 1315

## Early Psychosis Detection and Intervention Funding

Assembly Member Mullin

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of AB 1315 is to address an unmet need to provide evidence-based early psychosis detection and intervention services and supports to transition-aged youth and young adults who are at-risk of, or experiencing, psychotic symptoms or have psychotic disorders.

Fifty percent of all mental illness begins by the age of 14 and 75 percent by the age of 24, yet young people are often reluctant and afraid to seek help. Approximately 100,000 adolescents and young adults experience first episode psychosis each year.

Untreated psychosis increases a person's risk for suicide, involuntary emergency care, poor clinical outcomes, and can initiate a trajectory of accumulating disability into later adulthood. The average delay in receiving diagnosis and treatment for psychotic disorders is 18.5 months following the onset of psychotic symptoms.

Clinical research conducted world-wide supports a variety of evidence-based interventions for ameliorating psychotic symptoms and promoting functional recovery-oriented treatment.

Changing the paradigm from reactive to proactive early detection and treatment has demonstrated efficacy and is cost-beneficial as recognized by the federal SAMHSA and the National Institute of Mental Health, as well as independent evaluators. The principal goal is to intervene early, and to improve the client experience in accessing services and working towards lasting recovery and wellness.

### **SUMMARY**

AB 1315 will serve as a catalyst to invigorate evidence-based practices and will address a significant unmet gap in California's delivery system for transition-aged youth and young adults.

AB 1315 establishes a special fund and a competitive selection process to make awards as

specified to create new, and expand existing, evidence-based early psychosis detection and intervention services and supports.

The Early Psychosis Detection and Intervention Fund will be created for the purpose of private donations, and the deposit of other federal or state grants as applicable. Awards from this fund will be made according to a competitive selection process across interested County Behavioral Health Departments. Awardees will meet specified requirements for evidence-based services and supports, and provide a contribution of local funds, such as local Mental Health Services Act funds.

This private-public partnership is new and integral to achieving innovation in mental health care services for this very vulnerable target population.

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (Commission) will administer the competitive process with the expertise and assistance of an Advisory Committee.

A key aspect of AB 1315 is a focus on outcome oriented, evidence-based practices, with a designated evaluation framework as a component to the competitive selection process.

### **EXISTING LAW**

Existing law provides for the following:

(1) The Medi-Cal Program under which County Behavioral Health Departments provide specialty mental health services, including those offered under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnoses, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program (0-21 years). EPSDT provides services to eligible individuals who are diagnosed with experiencing serious emotional disturbance. This area of law primarily operates under a 1915b federal Waiver which, among other things, enables County Behavioral Health Departments to operate as Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans.

(2) The Mental Health Services Act provides funding and a framework for community-based programs in the areas of innovation, prevention and early intervention, and community services and supports. Generally, funds are allocated to counties base upon formulas with County Behavioral Health Departments administering programmatic components of the service delivery system. The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (Commission) provides oversight.

(3) The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a small amount of federal funding for the support of certain mental health and substance use disorder services. A portion of this amount is designated for early psychosis detection and intervention programs.

Existing law does not directly address in any comprehensive manner the specific need for evidence-based early psychosis detection and intervention services and supports, or funding for it comprehensively.

#### **SOLUTION**

AB 1315 provides a unique opportunity to incentivize County Behavioral Health Departments to address a glaring gap in services for California's transition-aged youth and young adults. Implementation of the Early Psychosis Detection and Intervention Fund and the competitive selection process would provide cost-beneficial, evidence-based services and supports to a target population in need. Funds will be available and programmatic components are known for implementation to be successful.

#### **SUPPORT**

Steinberg Institute

#### **CONTACT**

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