

Subject Mental health provider loan forgiveness, education, and training

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Overview

This bill modifies existing programs and establishes new programs at the Department of Health and Department of Human Services that support education and training of, and provide loan forgiveness to, professionals providing mental health or substance use disorder treatment services. At the Department of Health, the bill modifies the MERC program, expands eligibility for loan forgiveness under the health professional education loan forgiveness program, modifies the primary care residency expansion grant program, establishes grant programs for pediatric primary care mental health training and mental health cultural community continuing education, and establishes a mental health and substance use disorder education center. At the Department of Human Services, the bill expands eligible activities under the mental health provider supervision grant program, establishes the mental health professional scholarship grant program, establishes the youth care professional training program, and appropriates money for these activities.

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Definitions.
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	Amends § 62J.692, subd. 1. Amends the definition of eligible trainee FTEs for the medical education and research costs (MERC) program, to allow training hours counted for purposes of MERC to include training of students or residents to occur in locations other than an inpatient or ambulatory health care setting, as long as the training is connected to or under the scope of an inpatient or ambulatory health care setting. (Under current law, the training must occur in an inpatient or ambulatory health care setting. The MERC program compensates clinical medical education programs for a portion of the cost of training individuals in certain health care professions.)
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Section	Description
2	<p>Application process.</p> <p>Amends § 62J.692, subd. 3. Modifies the eligibility criteria for a clinical medical education program to receive MERC funds, to require the program to include training hours for trainees in the program in settings outside a hospital or clinic site as applicable.</p>
3	<p>Creation of account.</p> <p>Amends § 144.1501, subd. 2. Modifies eligibility for the health professional education loan forgiveness program, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ expand eligibility for medical residents to those who specialize in psychiatry, not just those who specialize in pediatric psychiatry as in current law; and▪ expand eligibility for nurses to those who agree to practice in an assisted living facility. <p>Also strikes obsolete language and makes a technical change.</p>
4	<p>Eligibility.</p> <p>Amends § 144.1501, subd. 3. Expands eligibility for loan forgiveness under the health professional education loan forgiveness program, to include individuals obtaining the required supervision hours to become one of the listed health professionals.</p>
5	<p>Consideration of expansion grant applications.</p> <p>Amends § 144.1506, subd. 4. Amends the primary care residency expansion grant program, to increase the number of psychiatry residents that must be supported with grants under this section from four psychiatry residents to five.</p>
6	<p>Pediatric primary care mental health training; grant program.</p> <p>Adds § 144.1507. Establishes a program in which the commissioner of health awards grants to develop child mental health training programs in outpatient primary care clinics.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Establishment. Requires the commissioner of health to award grants to develop child mental health training programs located in outpatient primary care clinics. Lists requirements that a training program must meet to be eligible for a grant.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Child mental health training grant program. Allows grants to be awarded to eligible primary care training programs to plan and implement new programs or expand existing programs in child mental health training. Allows funds to be spent for planning; training site improvements, fees, equipment, and</p>

Section	Description
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supplies to implement the training program; and support for clinical training in outpatient primary clinic sites.

Subd. 3. Applications for child mental health training grants. Requires eligible primary care training programs seeking a grant to apply to the commissioner, and lists information an application must include.

Subd. 4. Consideration of child mental health training grant applications. Requires the commissioner to review applications and award grants to up to four applicants.

Subd. 5. Program oversight. Allows the commissioner to require grantees to submit, and to collect from grantees, information needed to evaluate the training program.

7 Mental health cultural community continuing education grant program.

Adds § 144.1511. Establishes the mental health cultural community continuing education grant program at the Department of Health to provide grants for continuing education needed for social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychologists, and professional clinical counselors to become supervisors of individuals seeking licensure in a mental health profession. To be eligible for a grant, requires an applicant to be a member of a community of color or an underrepresented community, and to work for a community mental health provider and agree to deliver at least 25 percent of yearly patient encounters to state public program enrollees or patients receiving sliding fee discounts through a sliding fee schedule.

8 Mental health and substance use disorder education center.

Adds § 144.88. Establishes a Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Education Center at the Department of Health to increase the number of individuals working in mental health and substance use disorder treatment, increase the diversity of mental health and SUD professions, and create a culturally informed and responsive workforce. Requires the center to perform the listed functions, including examining the availability of mental health and SUD treatment professionals, educating individuals about becoming a mental health or SUD treatment professional, recommending steps to reduce barriers to licensure, promoting and expanding loan forgiveness programs, and educating other health professionals about mental health and substance use disorders. Requires the commissioner of health to annually report to certain members of the legislature on the center's activities and progress in addressing the mental health and SUD workforce shortage.

Section	Description
9	<p>Grant program established.</p> <p>Amends § 245.4663, subd. 1. Authorizes grants awarded under the mental health provider supervision grant program to be used to fund student preceptorships and to fund training for workers to become supervisors.</p>
10	<p>Allowable uses of grant funds.</p> <p>Amends § 245.4663, subd. 4. Allows funds from the mental health provider supervision grant program to be used to fund student preceptorships and to provide a weekend training program for workers to become supervisors.</p>
11	<p>Mental health professional scholarship grant program.</p> <p>Adds § 245.4664.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines “mental health professional” and “underrepresented community.”</p> <p>Subd. 2. Grant program established. Establishes the mental health professional scholarship grant program to assist mental health providers in funding employee scholarships for master's degree-level mental health professional education programs.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Provision of grants. Requires the commissioner of human services to award grants for tuition reimbursement and related costs to licensed or certified mental health providers who meet eligibility requirements and have worked in specified roles for at least two years; specifies roles.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Eligibility. Specifies that to be eligible, a grantee must provide at least 25 percent of the provider's yearly patient encounters to state public program enrollees or patients receiving sliding fee schedule discounts, or primarily serve people from communities of color or underrepresented communities.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Request for proposals. Requires the commissioner to publish a request for proposals in the State Register; specifies contents of the request for proposals.</p> <p>Subd. 6. Application requirements. Specifies requirements for grant applications.</p> <p>Subd. 7. Selection process. Requires the commissioner to determine a maximum grant award amount and to select grant recipients based on specified criteria; requires the commissioner to give preference to applicants who work in rural or culturally specific organizations.</p>

Section Description

Subd. 8. Grant agreements. Specifies that a grant award does not lapse until the grant agreement expires.

Subd. 9. Allowable uses of grant funds. Allows grant funds to be used to provide tuition reimbursement for master's degree-level programs for qualification as a mental health professional, or for resources and supports that allow an employee to attend such a program.

Subd. 10. Reporting requirements. Requires a provider that receives grant funds to submit an invoice for reimbursement and report to the commissioner; specifies information that must be reported.

12 Youth care professional training program.

Adds § 245.4906. Establishes the youth care professional training program within the Department of Human Services, to provide training and ongoing support for direct care staff in children's mental health treatment settings. Requires the commissioner to contract with a provider to establish training curriculum, and administer and implement the program; lists subjects the training courses must cover. Requires training completion to be recorded in the youth worker professional registry; requires that expert stakeholders be included in curriculum development.

13 Appropriation; health professional education loan forgiveness program.

Appropriates \$2,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 from the general fund to the commissioner of health for the health professional education loan forgiveness program, to be used for loan forgiveness for eligible mental health professionals.

14 Appropriation; additional psychiatry slot for primary care residency expansion grant program.

Makes blank appropriations in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of health for a fifth psychiatry resident under the primary care residency expansion grant program.

15 Appropriations; mental health training programs for pediatric primary care providers.

Appropriates \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2025 from the general fund for mental health training programs for pediatric primary care providers.

Section	Description
16	<p>Appropriations; mental health cultural community continuing education grant program.</p> <p>Appropriates \$500,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$500,000 in fiscal year 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of health for the mental health cultural community continuing education grant program.</p>
17	<p>Appropriations; mental health provider supervision grant program.</p> <p>Appropriates \$1,500,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$1,500,000 in fiscal year 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the mental health provider supervision grant program.</p>
18	<p>Appropriations; mental health professional scholarship grant program.</p> <p>Appropriates money in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the mental health professional scholarship grant program under Minnesota Statutes, section 245.4664.</p>
19	<p>Appropriations; youth care professional training program.</p> <p>Appropriates money in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the youth care professional training program and for a database to track program completion.</p>



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