

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL DRS45190-MGa-79 (03/07)

Short Title: MH/SA Central Assessment & Navigation Pilot. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Lee and Rabon (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CENTRAL ASSESSMENT AND NAVIGATION SYSTEM  
3 PILOT PROGRAM IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF  
4 INDIVIDUALS UTILIZING HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS FOR  
5 MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** Pilot Program Created. – The Department of Health and Human  
8 Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse  
9 Services, in consultation with the local management entity/managed care organization  
10 (LME/MCO) responsible for the management and provision of mental health, developmental  
11 disabilities, and substance use disorder services in New Hanover County under the 1915(b)/(c)  
12 Medicaid Waiver, shall oversee the establishment of a two-year pilot program in New Hanover  
13 County to focus on assessing and navigating individuals seeking mental health or substance use  
14 disorder services, or both, to appropriate community-based services or other community  
15 resources in order to reduce the utilization of hospital emergency department services for  
16 mental health and substance use disorder services.

17 **SECTION 1.(b)** Program Design and Location. – The pilot program shall be  
18 conducted at New Hanover Regional Medical Center (NHRMC) and at Wellness City, operated  
19 by Recovery Innovations, Inc., by a three-person centralized team. The three-person team shall  
20 consist of the following individuals:

- 21 (1) A master's level, fully licensed clinician to perform comprehensive clinical  
22 assessments of NHRMC patients and other New Hanover County residents  
23 exhibiting symptoms of mental illness or substance use disorder who are  
24 referred to the pilot program.
- 25 (2) A qualified professional to assist patients, particularly those with a  
26 completed comprehensive clinical assessment, with identifying and  
27 accessing appropriate community-based services or other community  
28 resources.
- 29 (3) A North Carolina certified peer support specialist, with specialized training  
30 and personal experience in successfully managing his or her own serious  
31 mental illness or substance use disorder, to provide peer support services,  
32 including encouraging patients to take personal responsibility for managing  
33 their condition, assisting patients in establishing meaningful roles in society,  
34 and providing patients with transportation to and from appointments.

35 **SECTION 1.(c)** Reports. – The LME/MCO responsible for the management and  
36 provision of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services in New



1 Hanover County, in collaboration with New Hanover Regional Medical Center and Recovery  
2 Innovations, Inc., shall make an interim report to the Department of Health and Human  
3 Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse  
4 Services, and the Fiscal Research Division on the effectiveness of the pilot program by July 1,  
5 2018. The Division shall then make an interim report to the Joint Legislative Oversight  
6 Committee on Health and Human Services by October 1, 2018, on the effectiveness of the  
7 program and the costs associated with administering the program. By July 1, 2019, the  
8 LME/MCO responsible for the management and provision of mental health, developmental  
9 disabilities, and substance abuse services in New Hanover County, in collaboration with New  
10 Hanover Regional Medical Center and Recovery Innovations, Inc., shall make a final report to  
11 the Division on the effectiveness of the program. The Division shall make a final report to the  
12 Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Fiscal Research  
13 Division by October 1, 2019, on the effectiveness of the program, along with any  
14 recommendations for sustaining or expanding the program.

15 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
16 Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and  
17 Substance Abuse Services, the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the  
18 2017-2018 fiscal year and the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the  
19 2018-2019 fiscal year to fund the central assessment and navigation system pilot program  
20 established under Section 1 of this act.

21 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.