


Date: Feb. 6, 2015	POLICY BRIEF PREPARED FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
Staff: Dan Sapienza		

HB15-1032 – LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TREAT MINORS

Concerning the addition of licensed mental health professionals as authorized providers of mental health services to minors who are at least fifteen years of age

Details

Bill Sponsors:	House – Singer (D) Senate – Aguilar (D)
Committee:	House Public Health Care and Human Services
Bill History:	02/06/2015 House Third Reading Passed - No Amendments House HIE Committee Vote: 13-0
Next Action:	Senate Action

Bill Summary

Under existing law, a minor 15 years of age or older can be treated by some mental health professionals with the minor’s consent (no parental consent required) at a facility or by a person licensed to practice medicine or psychology. This bill expands this to include other licensed mental health professionals, including social workers, marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, and addiction counselors.

Background

As noted above, minors fifteen years of age and older can receive mental health treatment without parental consent, but with the minor’s consent. This treatment can be provided at a “facility or by a professional person.” This requirement means that a psychiatrist or psychologist in private practice can provide a minor mental health treatment, but other licensed mental health professionals can only provide such treatment in a facility-based setting. This legislation seeks to remove that barrier to treatment and allow minors access to a large number of mental health professionals.

“According to the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), there are approximately 23,914 licensed physicians and psychologists in the state. There are approximately 19,839 additional mental health professionals who would be considered professional persons under the bill.”¹

This bill is supported by the Colorado Behavioral Health Council and many professional societies, and is being monitored by a number of other organizations. No known organizations in opposition.

About this Summary

This summary was prepared by Health District of Northern Larimer County staff to assist the Health District Board of Directors in determining whether to take an official stand on various health-related issues. The Health District is a special district of the northern two-thirds of Larimer County, Colorado, supported by local property tax dollars and governed by a publicly elected five-member board. The Health District provides medical, mental health, dental, preventive and health planning services to the communities it serves. For more information about this summary or the Health District, please contact Dan Sapienza, Policy Coordinator, at (970) 224-5209, or e-mail at dsapienza@healthdistrict.org.

¹ HB15-1032 Fiscal Note,
http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/clics2015a/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/4E70BD0DDEB0065F87257DA200626743?Open&file=HB1032_00.pdf