A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill establishes the Colorado child abuse response and evaluation network (CARENetwork) to improve the provision of services to children who are subject to physical or sexual abuse or neglect. The department of public health and environment is to contract with a nonprofit organization to act as a resource center. The bill specifies duties...
of the resource center.

The bill also establishes a CARENetwork advisory committee and specifies the membership and duties of the advisory committee.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares:

(a) Historically, there are over one hundred thousand suspected child abuse and neglect referrals to child welfare in Colorado each year, and, of those referrals, approximately one-third are screened in for an assessment;

(b) It is estimated that forty percent of the screened-in referrals involve suspected child abuse and neglect of children under the age of five, and twenty percent involve sexual abuse;

(c) However, expertise to conduct medical exams to evaluate suspected child abuse and neglect and to conduct behavioral health assessments is extremely limited. There are only six board-certified specialists in the field of child abuse pediatrics in Colorado, five of whom are located in Denver and one of whom is located in Colorado Springs.

(d) Distances limit access to expert evaluations in most of the state's sixty-four counties, resulting in a serious problem with a lack of providers willing and able to conduct medical exams for suspected physical or sexual abuse or neglect and to conduct behavioral health assessments;

(e) All children at risk of child abuse and neglect deserve access to appropriate medical and behavioral health assessments;

(f) Engaging health care professionals and behavioral health providers in the protection of children experiencing maltreatment will
expand the safety net for children with the goal of reducing severe child
maltreatment and fatalities; and

(g) Educating and training health care and behavioral health
providers about signs that children may be at risk of maltreatment and
about resources available to families will position the providers to
recognize community-specific needs and help prevent child maltreatment.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add part 9 to article
20.5 of title 25 as follows:

PART 9
COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE
AND EVALUATION NETWORK (CARENetwork)

25-20.5-901. Short title. The short title of this part 9 is the
"COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK
(CARENetwork) Act".

25-20.5-902. Definitions. As used in this part 9, unless the
context otherwise requires:

(1) "Advisory committee" means the CARENetwork
advisory committee established pursuant to section 25-20.5-904.

(2) "Colorado child abuse resource and evaluation
network" or "CARENetwork" means a network comprised of a
resource center, designated providers, and other community
partners that collaborate to develop and maintain a
standardized, coordinated response to suspected physical or
sexual abuse or neglect.

(3) "Designated provider" means a physician, nurse,
advanced practice provider, or behavioral health provider who
is licensed in this state and who meets the criteria established
TO BE A DESIGNATED PROVIDER IN THE CARENETWORK.

(4) "RESOURCE CENTER" MEANS A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION WITH BOARD-CERTIFIED SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD OF CHILD ABUSE PEDIATRICS AND WITH EXPERTISE TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS OF MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE FOR THE CARENETWORK AND PROVIDE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR DESIGNATED PROVIDERS.

25-20.5-903. CARENetwork - structure - resource center.

(1) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT THE COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO CHILDREN UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE FOR SUSPECTED CASES OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT AND CHILDREN UNDER THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE FOR SUSPECTED SEXUAL ABUSE. IN IMPLEMENTING THE CARENETWORK, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL COORDINATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.

(2) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2019, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL AWARD A CONTRACT TO A RESOURCE CENTER TO ESTABLISH THE CARENETWORK. THE RESOURCE CENTER SHALL:

(a) WORK TO INCREASE LOCAL CAPACITY OF HEALTH CARE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS TO PERFORM MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR SUSPECTED CASES OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT BY BUILDING APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AND PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CARENETWORK;

(b) DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS ACROSS THE STATE FOR THE CARENETWORK FOR MEDICAL EXAMS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR CHILDREN DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION;

(c) DEVELOP A STREAMLINED REFERRAL PROCESS TO DESIGNATED
PROVIDERS FOR CHILDREN TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE CARE, INCLUDING
COORDINATED HAND-OFFS TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES;

(d) Establish an efficient structure, considering
geography and identified community needs, to ensure a
coordinated response to suspected cases of physical or sexual
abuse or neglect;

(e) Encourage participation and enhance the role of
medical providers in multidisciplinary teams to provide support
for the CARENetwork;

(f) Provide education and training, collaborative
mentorship, and support for designated providers serving
children in their communities, including, education and training
about signs that children may be at risk of maltreatment and
resources available to families;

(g) Collect and analyze data to identify and monitor
outcomes of the CARENetwork and to guide ongoing program
analyses, resulting in the development of best practices that
encourage continuous improvement and fidelity of the
CARENetwork’s standard of care;

(h) Develop a structure for appropriate payments to
designated providers; and

(i) Report annually to the advisory committee and the
executive directors of the department and the department of
human services on activities of the CARENetwork.

25-20.5-904. CARENetwork - advisory board membership -
duties - repeal. (1) (a) The department shall establish the
CARENetwork advisory committee, which is comprised of nine
MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND POSSESSING EXPERTISE OR EXPERIENCE IN PROVIDING MEDICAL OR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE TO CHILDREN, WORKING WITHIN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM, AND ADMINISTERING CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMMING AT THE COUNTY LEVEL, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE EDUCATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITIES, AND AN ENTITY THAT ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN.

(b) Members of the advisory committee shall serve three-year terms; except that, of the members initially appointed to the advisory committee, the executive director shall appoint five for three-year terms and four for two-year terms. In the event of a vacancy on the advisory committee, the executive director shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired portion of the term of such member.

(c) The advisory committee shall designate a member to serve as the chair. The advisory committee shall meet as necessary at the call of the chair.

(d) Members of the advisory committee serve without compensation or reimbursement of expenses.

(2) The advisory committee has the following duties:

(a) Advise the department on the CARENetwork program;

(b) Make recommendations to the state board of health regarding rules to be promulgated, including but not limited to:

(I) The definition of covered services for eligible children;

(II) Establishment of payment rates for covered services;

(III) Development of specific requirements for designated
PROVIDERS; AND

(IV) DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS OF MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL

HEALTH CARE FOR THE CARENETWORK.

(3) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2029.

PRIOR TO SUCH REPEAL, THE DEPARTMENT OF REGULATORY AGENCIES

SHALL REVIEW THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION

2-3-1203.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 2-3-1203, add (20)

as follows:

2-3-1203. Sunset review of advisory committees - legislative
definition - repeal. (20) (a) THE FOLLOWING STATUTORY

AUTHORIZATIONS FOR THE DESIGNATED ADVISORY COMMITTEES WILL

REPEAL ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2029:

(I) THE CARENETWORK ADVISORY COMMITTEE CREATED IN

SECTION 25-20.5-904.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (20) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1,

2031.

SECTION 4. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds,
determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.