

Rep. Loudenbeck: Statement on passage of bill allowing emergency access to mental health treatment for homeless unaccompanied youth

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 21, 2018

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Madison – Yesterday, Assembly Bill 848 (AB 848) authored by Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton) that would allow minors to have access to mental health treatment in emergency situations passed the Assembly on a voice vote.

AB 848 would waive the requirement for informed consent for outpatient mental health treatment of minors in emergency situations or where time and distance requirements preclude obtaining written consent before beginning treatment and a determination is made that potential harm may come to the patient or others before written consent is obtained. AB 848 requires that before this waiver could be used, the provider must have made an effort to obtain written consent from a parent or guardian of a minor patient. Additionally, under the provisions of AB 848 the waiver is limited to a period of 30 days, during which time informed consent shall be obtained in writing or the MHRO process shall be initiated.

AB 848 specifically prohibits the health care provider from admitting a minor to an inpatient facility or an inpatient treatment facility and prohibits the health care

provider from prescribing medications to a minor seeking treatment for a mental health condition without the consent of a parent or guardian.

“My office has been working with local advocates and stakeholders to increase the use of the MHRO process, but concerns remain regarding the health and well-being of an unaccompanied minor in between the time of referral and the determination of the MHRO,” said Loudenberg. “A brave teenager who was identified as a homeless unaccompanied youth at the Beloit School District came to Madison to testify on her experience going through the MHRO process, and how a waiver like this would have helped her receive treatment sooner.”

The bill will now wait for final action from the State Senate.

For more information about the bill, follow this link:

http://www.thewheelerreport.com/wheeler_docs/files/0118loudenberg.pdf

To track the progress of the bill, follow this link:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/proposals/reg/asm/bill/ab848>