

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 445

Introduced by Stinner, 48.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this interim study is to update data and review the potential impact on the state behavioral health system by expanding access to prescribing psychologists.

Nebraska has a documented shortage of adequately trained prescribers of psychotropic medication across the state. This leaves consumers of all ages underserved, with particularly adverse effects on consumers in rural areas and on children and adolescents. Clinical psychologists have the same number of years of education and doctoral level clinical experience as physicians who attend medical school, but clinical psychologists are focused on mental health diagnosis and treatment. Specially trained prescribing psychologists would also have additional post-doctoral training in prescriptive authority for psychotropic medication, including three years of physician-supervised practice and continuing competency requirements.

Prescribing psychologists that currently practice in the United States Public Health Services, Indian Health Service, and United States military have had an excellent safety record for more than 20 years. Other states have passed legislation allowing specially trained psychologists to prescribe and there is significant data on the positive effects and outcomes of adding another category of highly trained prescribers to serve constituents.

The study shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the following:

(1) The status of behavioral health access in the state, including the availability of prescribers, continuity of care, and integration of behavioral and physical healthcare services;

(2) The training and education of prescribing psychologists who provide

assessments, psychotherapies, and management of psychotropic medications; and

(3) How prescribing psychologists work with other health care professionals to serve patients safely and effectively.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.