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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

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## DIGEST

Proposed law provides for health solutions centers in the office of the coroner in a parish having a population between 191,000 and 192,000, according to the year 2000 census.

Proposed law provides for legislative intent as follows:

- (1) That certain parishes have been subjected to escalating mental health issues, exacerbated by the impact of Hurricane Katrina and continued emotional pain and suffering, which have resulted in a backlog of treatment for mental health services.
- (2) Certain parishes now see suicide prevention and resolving mental health issues as the primary health need of the parish.
- (3) Too often individuals who have been treated and stabilized after they were committed and were released often to return home to a family situation where the family is often unable or does not know how to assist the individual in continuing medication and treatment so that the individual does not take their own life or the life of another person.
- (4) The cornerstone of any effective treatment system for any person suffering from suicide tendencies and severe mental illness includes the positive caring and knowledgeable support of the family, peers, civic organizations, and members of the community.
- (5) The family-centered treatment model enables early intervention, active engagement and customized care for those in need of continued mental health services.
- (6) The family-centered treatment model enables individuals suffering from severe mental health illness to receive other information and access to resources which are not necessarily directly related to mental health issues, such as information regarding food banks and spiritual support.

Proposed law provides that the coroner, through the health solution center may direct a continued home-based support system for patients who meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) The patient was committed pursuant to a mental health or substance abuse facility.
- (2) The patient successfully completes the treatment program and is released.
- (3) Where the patient voluntarily consents to have the personnel of the coroner, performing duties in conjunction with the health solutions center, visit the patient in the patient's home.

Proposed law provides that the health solution center may establish a convenient, community resource center that is accessible by telephone or the internet to provide 24 hour support for patients to provide education and answers about available community resources for mental health patients, including the types of resources available, location of resources, transportation, and other instructions on accessing such resources.

Proposed law provides that any information provided by the patient to the health solution center, via the telephone or Internet, shall be treated in the same manner as any patient information which is subject to patient confidentiality, unless the confidentiality is waived by the patient.

Proposed law provides that the health solutions center may apply for and receive any grants, funds or moneys from any foundation, nonprofit organization, governmental agency or entity.

Proposed law provides that the health solutions center may notify the patient that personnel of the coroner, performing duties in conjunction with the health solutions center, may visit the patient in the patient's home to provide home-based support with the express consent of the patient.

Proposed law provides that each patient, upon discharge from the treatment facility, shall be given a form which authorizes the personnel of the coroner, acting through the health solutions center, to visit the patient in their home and which form also allows the patient to request certain information about community programs and services.

Proposed law provides that, if a patient completes the form consenting to home-based services, it shall be returned to the health solutions center at the office of the coroner and the patient shall be given a copy.

Proposed law provides that the health solutions center advisory board is created to advise the coroner on matters related to the services provided through the health solutions center and shall have following members:

- (1) The executive director of the coroners office, who shall serve as the chair of the board.
- (2) One member appointed by the Mental Health America of Louisiana association.
- (3) The director of the Mental Health Advocacy Service, or his or her designee.
- (4) One member appointed by the Ministerial Alliance for the parish.
- (5) One member, appointed by the coroner who is a member of a civic organization which provides charitable resources or services to low income patients.

Proposed law provides that any and all personnel of the coroner, who are performing duties in conjunction with the health solutions center, shall be immune from criminal penalties or civil damages unless the damage or injury is caused by willful or wanton negligence or gross misconduct.

Proposed law defines "personnel of the office of the coroner" to mean any person who provides services or furnishes assistance through the health solutions center, including an employee, contractor, or volunteer.

Effective August 15, 2010.

(Adds R.S. 28:22.1)