

**RCW 72.23.025 Eastern and western state hospitals—Primary diagnosis of mental disorder—Duties—Institutes for the study and treatment of mental disorders established.** (1) It is the intent of the legislature to improve the quality of service at state hospitals, eliminate overcrowding, and more specifically define the role of the state hospitals. The legislature intends that eastern and western state hospitals shall become clinical centers for handling the most complicated long-term care needs of patients with a primary diagnosis of mental disorder. To this end, the legislature intends that funds appropriated for mental health programs, including funds for behavioral health administrative services organizations, managed care organizations contracted with the health care authority, and the state hospitals, be used for persons with primary diagnosis of mental disorder. The legislature finds that establishment of institutes for the study and treatment of mental disorders at both eastern state hospital and western state hospital will be instrumental in implementing the legislative intent.

(2) (a) There is established at eastern state hospital and western state hospital, institutes for the study and treatment of mental disorders. The institutes shall be operated by joint operating agreements between state colleges and universities and the department of social and health services. The institutes are intended to conduct training, research, and clinical program development activities that will directly benefit persons with mental illness who are receiving treatment in Washington state by performing the following activities:

(i) Promote recruitment and retention of highly qualified professionals at the state hospitals and community mental health programs;

(ii) Improve clinical care by exploring new, innovative, and scientifically based treatment models for persons presenting particularly difficult and complicated clinical syndromes;

(iii) Provide expanded training opportunities for existing staff at the state hospitals and community mental health programs;

(iv) Promote bilateral understanding of treatment orientation, possibilities, and challenges between state hospital professionals and community mental health professionals.

(b) To accomplish these purposes the institutes may, within funds appropriated for this purpose:

(i) Enter joint operating agreements with state universities or other institutions of higher education to accomplish the placement and training of students and faculty in psychiatry, psychology, social work, occupational therapy, nursing, and other relevant professions at the state hospitals and community mental health programs;

(ii) Design and implement clinical research projects to improve the quality and effectiveness of state hospital services and operations;

(iii) Enter into agreements with community mental health service providers to accomplish the exchange of professional staff between the state hospitals and community mental health service providers;

(iv) Establish a student loan forgiveness and conditional scholarship program to retain qualified professionals at the state hospitals and community mental health providers when the secretary has determined a shortage of such professionals exists.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, the institutes may enter into agreements with the department or the

state hospitals which may involve changes in staffing necessary to implement improved patient care programs contemplated by this section.

(d) The institutes are authorized to seek and accept public or private gifts, grants, contracts, or donations to accomplish their purposes under this section. [2019 c 325 § 5028; 2014 c 225 § 98; 2011 1st sp.s. c 21 § 1; 2006 c 333 § 204; 1998 c 245 § 141; 1992 c 230 § 1; 1989 c 205 § 21.]

**Effective date—2019 c 325:** See note following RCW 71.24.011.

**Effective date—2014 c 225:** See note following RCW 71.24.016.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 21:** "Except for sections 53 and 60 of this act, this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2011." [2011 1st sp.s. c 21 § 64.]

**Finding—Purpose—Intent—Severability—Part headings not law—Effective dates—2006 c 333:** See notes following RCW 71.24.016.

**Intent—1992 c 230:** "It is the intent of this act to:

(1) Focus, restate, and emphasize the legislature's commitment to the mental health reform embodied in chapter 111 [205], Laws of 1989 (SB 5400);

(2) Eliminate, or schedule for repeal, statutes that are no longer relevant to the regulation of the state's mental health program; and

(3) Reaffirm the state's commitment to provide incentives that reduce reliance on inappropriate state hospital or other inpatient care." [1992 c 230 § 3.]

**Evaluation of transition to regional systems—1989 c 205:** See note following RCW 71.24.015.