

RCW 71.12.700 Psychiatric hospitals—Technical assistance. (1)

Any psychiatric hospital may request from the department or the department may offer to any psychiatric hospital technical assistance. The department may not provide technical assistance during an inspection or during the time between when an investigation of a psychiatric hospital has been initiated and when such investigation is resolved.

(2) The department may offer group training to psychiatric hospitals licensed under this chapter. [2020 c 115 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2020 c 115: "The legislature finds that patients seeking behavioral health care in Washington would benefit from consistent regulatory oversight and transparency about patient outcomes. Current regulatory oversight of psychiatric hospitals licensed under chapter 71.12 RCW needs to be enhanced to protect the health, safety, and well-being of patients seeking behavioral health care in these facilities. Some hospitals have not complied with state licensing requirements. Additional enforcement tools are needed to address noncompliance and protect patients from risk of harm.

The legislature also finds that licensing and enforcement requirements for all health care facility types regulated by the department of health are inconsistent and that patients are not well-served by this inconsistency. Review of the regulatory requirements for all health care facility types, including acute care hospitals, is needed to identify gaps and opportunities to consolidate and standardize requirements. Legislation will be necessary to implement uniform requirements that assure provision of safe, quality care and create consistency and predictability for facilities." [2020 c 115 § 1.]

Effective date—2020 c 115: "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 immediately [March 25, 2020]." [2020 c 115 § 9.]