Legislative Briefing

OHA Health Policy Action

Your guide to proposed health legislation, what we think about it, and what we're doing about it.

March 2013

S.B. No. 169; AN ACT CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR CHILDREN.

What is this bill about?

S.B. 169 will enhance the provision of social, emotional, behavioral and mental health services. This bill reinforces increased screening and interventions at schools and at school based health centers, which provide high quality mental health and substance use screening and treatment services.

We recognize the bill is limited in that it only encompasses the school domain, and doesn't take into consideration home or community interventions.

What are the implications of this bill for healthcare consumer advocacy?

The highest volume of calls regards mental health. With the placement of this bill, the number of mental health issues and severity may decrease for young children and produce a cascading effect into adulthood.

Talking Points

1. OHA is aware of this proposed legislation and submitted written public testimony **in support** of this bill.
2. This legislation will improve mental health and substance use services at schools.
3. OHA supports this legislation based on the principles of access to quality healthcare, evidence-based improvements to our healthcare system, and consumer maximization of value for their health insurance premiums.

Please refer all media, agency, and legislator inquiries to Vicki Veltri

OHA represents the collective voice of 3.5 million healthcare consumers. For our state to be competitive, our people must be healthy. Our mission is to • assure managed care consumers have access to medically necessary healthcare • educate consumers about their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans • inform legislators of problems consumers face in accessing care and propose solutions to those problems.