Family Caregivers Support Act

This act requires the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to develop evidence-based caregiver assessments and referral tools for family caregivers. Further, a plan of care would be developed which would take into account the needs of the caregiver and the recipient.

Submitted as:
Rhode Island
HB 5155
Status: Signed into law on July 16, 2013.

Suggested State Legislation

(Title, enacting clause, etc.)

1 Section 1. [Short Title.] Family Caregivers Support Act.

2 Section 2. [Assessment and Coordination Unit (ACU).]
(a) The [department of human services], in collaboration with the [executive office of health and human services], shall implement a long-term care options counseling program to provide
individuals or their representative, or both, with long-term care consultations that shall include, at a minimum, information about long-term care options, sources and methods of both public and private payment for long term care services, information on caregiver support services, including respite care, and an assessment of an individual's functional capabilities and opportunities for maximizing independence. Each individual admitted to or seeking admission to a long-term care facility, regardless of the payment source, shall be informed by the facility of the availability of the long-term care options counseling program and shall be provided with a long-term care options consultation, if he or she so requests. Each individual who applies for Medicaid long-term care services shall be provided with a long-term care consultation.

(b) Core and preventative home and community based services defined and delineated in [Insert citation] shall be provided only to those individuals who meet one of the levels of care provided for in this chapter. Other long term care services authorized by the federal government, such as medication management, may also be provided to Medicaid eligible recipients who have established the requisite need as determined by the Assessment and Coordination Unit (ACU). Access to institutional and community based supports and services shall be through the Assessment and Coordination Unit (ACU). The provision of Medicaid-funded long-term care services and supports shall be based upon a comprehensive assessment that shall include, but not be limited to, an evaluation of the medical, social and environmental needs of each applicant for these services or programs. The assessment shall serve as the basis for the development and provision of an appropriate plan of care for the applicant.

(c) The ACU shall assess the financial eligibility of beneficiaries to receive long-term care services and supports in accordance with the applicable provisions of [Insert citation.]

(d) The ACU shall be responsible for conducting assessments; determining a level of care for applicants for medical assistance; developing service plans; pricing a service budget and
developing a voucher when appropriate; making referrals to appropriate settings; maintaining a component of the unit that will provide training to and will educate consumers, discharge planners and providers; tracking utilization; monitoring outcomes; and reviewing service/care plan changes. The ACU shall provide interdisciplinary high cost case reviews and choice counseling for eligible recipients.

(e) The assessments for individuals conducted in accordance with this section shall serve as the basis for individual budgets for those medical assistance recipients eligible to receive services utilizing a self-directed delivery system.

(f) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the secretary of the [executive office of health and human services], or the directors of that office's departments from utilizing community agencies or contractors when appropriate to perform assessment functions outlined in this chapter.

Section 3. [Findings.]

Section 4. [Definitions.]
(a) "Caregiver assessment" is defined and refers to a systematic process of gathering information about a caregiving situation to identify the specific problems, needs, strengths, and resources of the family caregiver, as well as the caregiver's ability to contribute to the needs of the care recipient.

(b) The term "family caregiver" is defined and refers to any relative, partner, friend, or neighbor who has a significant relationship with, and who provides a broad range of assistance for, an older adult or an adult or child with chronic or disabling conditions.

Section 5. [Caregiver assessment requirement.]
The comprehensive assessment required in Section 2 as part of Medicaid long-term service reform shall also include a caregiver assessment whenever the plan of care depends on a family caregiver for providing assistance with activities of daily living needs. The assessment shall be used to develop a plan of care that recognizes both needs of the care recipient and the caregiver. The assessment shall also serve as the basis for development and provision of an appropriate plan for caregiver information, referral and support services. Information about available respite programs, caregiver training and education programs, support groups and community support services shall be included as part of the caregiver support plan. To implement the caregiver assessment, the executive office of health and human services shall adopt evidenced-based caregiver assessments and referral tools appropriate to the departments within the office that provide long-term care services and support.

Section 6. [Severability.] Insert severability clause.

Section 7. [Repealer.] Insert repealer clause.

Section 8. [Effective Date.] Insert effective date.