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An Act To Provide Youth Mental Health First Aid Training to Secondary School Health Educators

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 223, sub-c. 10 is enacted to read:

SUBCHAPTER 10

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

§ 6671. Youth mental health first aid training

The department shall establish a youth mental health first aid training program for health educators in secondary schools pursuant to this section.

1. Recipients of training. The department shall schedule training for and ensure training is provided to health educators in secondary schools responsible for implementing health education pursuant to section 4723.

2. Providers of training. The department shall ensure training is delivered by trainers who are properly certified by a national organization for behavioral health as designated by the department to provide training pursuant to subsection 3.

3. Content of training. The training provided pursuant to this section must be in compliance with a course of instruction in youth mental health first aid operated by the national organization for behavioral health under subsection 2 and include training on the skills, resources and knowledge necessary to assist students in crisis to connect with appropriate local mental health care services, training on mental health resources, including the location of local community mental health centers, and training on action plans and protocols for referral to such resources. Recipients of the training must also receive training to:

A. Safely de-escalate crisis situations;

B. Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness, including such psychiatric conditions as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major clinical depression and anxiety disorders; and

C. Timely refer students to mental health services in the early stages of their development of mental disorders to avoid subsequent behavioral health care and to enhance the effectiveness of mental health services.

4. Rules. The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Education to establish a program to ensure health educators in secondary schools receive training from properly credentialed trainers in youth mental health first aid.