STATE OF NEW YORK

8371

IN SENATE

May 19, 2020

Introduced by Sens. JORDAN, ORTT -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Finance

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to enacting the health care worker peer support program; and making an appropriation therefor

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "health care worker peer support program".

§ 2. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 7.49 to read as follows:

§ 7.49 Health care worker peer support program.

(a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Program" shall mean the "health care worker peer support program" established by this section.

(2) "Eligible entities" shall mean an entity which submits to the commissioner an application, in a form prescribed by the commissioner, containing such information and assurances as the commissioner may require to provide initial and continued training in mental illness, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide prevention, for health care worker volunteers.

(b) The commissioner shall establish a grant program to be known as the "health care worker peer support program". Such program shall provide grants, within appropriations therefor, to eligible entities for the purpose of establishing peer-to-peer mental health programs for health care workers.

(c) The commissioner shall establish standards applicable to such program. Such standards shall include initial and continued training for health care worker peer volunteers, administrative staffing needs, and best practices for addressing the needs of each health care worker served.

(d) Grants may be awarded by the commissioner to an eligible entity in an amount that does not exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(e) The commissioner shall not require the recipient of any grant under this section to maintain records on health care workers seeking support or report any personal identifying information directly or indirectly to the commissioner.

§ 3. The sum of ten million dollars ($10,000,000), or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the office of mental health out of any moneys in the state treasury in the general fund to the credit of the state purposes account, not otherwise appropriated, and made immediately available, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.