

Introduced by

1 A BILL for an Act to provide for a mental health and substance abuse services pilot voucher
2 payment program; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES PILOT**

5 **VOUCHER PAYMENT PROGRAM.** The department of human services shall establish and
6 operate a pilot voucher payment program to provide mental health and substance abuse
7 services for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013. The department
8 shall seek funding for the pilot voucher payment program from federal, special, or other funding
9 sources. The pilot voucher payment program must consist of voucher use and provider choice
10 as a method of providing mental health and substance abuse services to beneficiaries. The
11 program must allow a voucher to be submitted to the beneficiary's provider of choice for
12 payment of mental health and substance abuse services. The department of human services
13 shall develop service agreements with mental health and substance abuse services providers
14 to supply services in exchange for the vouchers, which may be presented to the department for
15 payment as provided for in the agreement. The mental health and substance abuse services
16 pilot voucher payment program must be developed to improve access to mental health and
17 substance abuse services, including addiction treatment, counseling services, transition
18 services, attendant care, and safe beds. The department of human services shall offer the
19 mental health and substance abuse services pilot voucher payment program in three human
20 service regions of the state as determined by the department as follows:

- 21 1. A primarily urban region where a variety of mental health and substance abuse
22 services are available, but where access to services is limited;
23 2. A primarily rural region where a variety of mental health and substance abuse
24 services are not available; and

1 3. A region including an Indian reservation where the demand for mental health and
2 substance abuse services may exceed the capacity of existing mental health and
3 substance abuse service providers.

4 **SECTION 2. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES REVIEW - REPORT TO THE**

5 **LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT.** The department of human services shall perform a
6 comprehensive review of the mental health and substance abuse services pilot voucher
7 payment program for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013. The
8 review must include information regarding the cost of mental health and substance abuse
9 services provided through the pilot voucher payment program compared to the cost of similar
10 mental health and substance abuse services provided in other regions during the 2011-13
11 biennium and to services in the pilot regions during the 2009-11 biennium. The review must
12 also analyse the effect of the mental health and substance abuse services pilot voucher
13 payment program on access to care and outcomes.

14 The department of human services shall report the preliminary findings of the
15 comprehensive review and any recommendations for continuation or expansion of the voucher
16 payment program to the legislative management prior to September 30, 2012.