

The House Committee on Health offers the following substitute to HB 677:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions of health, so as to provide for certain placement procedures for children upon discharge from a hospital or psychiatric residential treatment facility in certain circumstances; to provide for related matters; to provide for contingent effectiveness; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions of health, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"31-1-26.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) 'Acute psychiatric care' means a level of care that is highly structured for patients who are a risk to themselves or others.

(2) 'Multi-Agency Treatment for Children' or 'MATCH' team means a collection of professionals with the purpose of determining the best placement option for a child following a discharge order from a hospital or psychiatric residential treatment facility.

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Such teams shall be composed of a licensed psychiatrist, and representatives from the hospital or psychiatric residential treatment facility, Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services; the Department of Juvenile Justice; the Department of Early Care and Learning; the Department of Public Health; the Department of Community Health; the Department of Insurance; the Department of Education; the Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children; and the Department of Corrections. Additionally, such term may include the referring physician.

(b) Every hospital and psychiatric residential treatment facility in this state shall adhere to the following procedures for instances in which the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a child who has received psychiatric care or acute psychiatric care at such hospital or facility fails to take physical custody of such child within 48 hours of a physician's discharge order from such hospital or facility:

(1) Assemble a MATCH team to determine the best placement for the child; and

(2) Without delay, place such child into an appropriate environment which may include, but is not limited to, the child's family home, a foster home, a kinship home, a community based or medical facility, or such other environment as the MATCH team may determine appropriate. If necessary to ensure that such placement occurs without delay, the MATCH team shall meet on an emergency basis."

SECTION 2.

Each MATCH team affected by this Act shall submit such information as may be requested by the Department of Human Services. Such department shall submit a report to the chairpersons of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee by December 31 of the year following the year in which this Act becomes effective. Such report shall include the number of children and length of stay of such children at a hospital or psychiatric residential treatment facility during the year that the report is submitted but for a period time no later than December 1 of that year.

43 **SECTION 3.**

44 This Act shall become effective only if funds are specifically appropriated for the purposes
45 of this Act in an appropriations Act making specific reference to this Act and shall become
46 effective when such funds so appropriated become available for expenditure.

47 **SECTION 4.**

48 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.