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CS/CS/HB 501

2019 Legislature

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 2 An act relating to alternative treatment options for
 3 veterans; creating s. 295.156, F.S.; providing
 4 definitions; authorizing the Department of Veterans'
 5 Affairs to contract with a state university or Florida
 6 College System institution to furnish specified
 7 alternative treatment options for certain veterans;
 8 providing university or institution responsibilities;
 9 providing requirements for provision of alternative
 10 treatment options and related assessment data;
 11 providing alternative treatment eligibility
 12 requirements; requiring direction and supervision by
 13 certain licensed providers; requiring an annual report
 14 to the Governor and Legislature; authorizing the
 15 department to adopt rules; providing an effective
 16 date.

17
 18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 20 Section 1. Section 295.156, Florida Statutes, is created
 21 to read:

22 295.156 Alternative treatment options for veterans.-

23 (1) As used in this section, the term:

24 (a) "Posttraumatic stress disorder" means a mental health
 25 disorder that is developed after having experienced or witnessed

ENROLLED

CS/CS/HB 501

2019 Legislature

26 | a life-threatening event, including, but not limited to,
27 | military sexual trauma.

28 | (b) "Traumatic brain injury" means an acquired injury to
29 | the brain. The term does not include brain dysfunction caused by
30 | congenital or degenerative disorders or birth trauma.

31 | (2) The Department of Veterans' Affairs may contract with
32 | a state university or Florida College System institution to
33 | furnish alternative treatment options for veterans who have been
34 | certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or
35 | any branch of the United States Armed Forces as having a
36 | traumatic brain injury or posttraumatic stress disorder. The
37 | university or institution shall manage, monitor, and ensure the
38 | compliance of contracted providers who provide any of the
39 | following alternative treatment options:

40 | (a) Accelerated resolution therapy.

41 | (b) Equine therapy.

42 | (c) Hyperbaric oxygen therapy, which must be provided at a
43 | registered hyperbaric oxygen facility.

44 | (d) Music therapy.

45 | (e) Service animal training therapy.

46 | (3) A veteran qualifies to receive alternative treatment
47 | under this section if he or she:

48 | (a) Has been diagnosed by a health care practitioner with
49 | service-connected posttraumatic stress disorder or a service-
50 | connected traumatic brain injury;

ENROLLED

CS/CS/HB 501

2019 Legislature

51 (b) Voluntarily agrees to such alternative treatment; and
 52 (c) Can demonstrate that he or she has previously sought
 53 services for posttraumatic stress disorder or a traumatic brain
 54 injury through the federal Veterans Affairs service delivery
 55 system or through private health insurance, if such coverage is
 56 available to him or her.

57 (4) (a) The provision of alternative treatment must be
 58 under the direction and supervision of an individual licensed
 59 under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter 464,
 60 chapter 490, or chapter 491.

61 (b) The supervising licensed provider must agree to
 62 cooperate with the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide
 63 data sufficient to assess the efficacy of alternative treatment
 64 modalities.

65 (5) By January 1 of each year beginning in 2020, the
 66 Department of Veterans' Affairs shall prepare a report detailing
 67 each alternative treatment provided pursuant to this section,
 68 the provider type, the number of veterans served, and the
 69 treatment outcomes and shall submit the report to the Governor,
 70 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
 71 Representatives.

72 (6) The Department of Veterans' Affairs may adopt rules to
 73 implement this section.

74 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.