

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1655

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services under part B of the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 7, 2003

Mr. STRICKLAND introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services under part B of the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Seniors Mental Health
5 Access Improvement Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. COVERAGE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST**
2 **SERVICES UNDER PART B.**

3 (a) COVERAGE OF SERVICES.—Section 1861(s)(2) of
4 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(s)(2)) is amend-
5 ed—

6 (1) in subparagraph (U), by striking “and” at
7 the end;

8 (2) in subparagraph (V), by striking the period
9 at the end and inserting “; and”; and

10 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
11 paragraph:

12 “(W) marriage and family therapist serv-
13 ices (as defined in subsection (ww)(1));”.

14 (b) DEFINITION.—Section 1861 of such Act (42
15 U.S.C. 1395x) is amended by adding at the end thereof
16 the following new subsection:

17 “Marriage and Family Therapist Services

18 “(ww)(1) The term ‘marriage and family therapist
19 services’ means services performed by a marriage and
20 family therapist (as defined in paragraph (2)) for the diag-
21 nosis and treatment of mental illnesses, which the mar-
22 riage and family therapist is legally authorized to perform
23 under State law (or the State regulatory mechanism pro-
24 vided by State law) of the State in which such services
25 are performed, as would otherwise be covered if furnished
26 by a physician or as an incident to a physician’s profes-

1 sional service, but only if no facility or other provider
2 charges or is paid any amounts with respect to the fur-
3 nishing of such services.

4 “(2) The term ‘marriage and family therapist’ means
5 an individual who—

6 “(A) possesses a master’s or doctoral degree
7 which qualifies for licensure or certification as a
8 marriage and family therapist pursuant to State
9 law;

10 “(B) after obtaining such degree has performed
11 at least two years of clinical supervised experience in
12 marriage and family therapy; and

13 “(C) in the case of an individual performing
14 services in a State that provides for licensure or cer-
15 tification of marriage or family therapists, is li-
16 censed or certified as a marriage and family thera-
17 pist in such State.”.

18 (c) PROVISION FOR PAYMENT UNDER PART B.—Sec-
19 tion 1832(a)(2)(B) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
20 1395k(a)(2)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
21 lowing new clause:

22 “(v) marriage and family therapist
23 services;”.

24 (d) AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—Section 1833(a)(1) of
25 such Act (42 U.S.C. 13951(a)(1)) is amended—

1 (1) by striking “and (U)” and inserting “(U”);
2 and

3 (2) by inserting before the semicolon at the end
4 the following: “, and (V) with respect to marriage
5 and family therapist services under section
6 1861(s)(2)(W), the amounts paid shall be 80 percent
7 of the lesser of the actual charge for the services or
8 75 percent of the amount determined for payment of
9 a psychologist under clause (L)”.

10 (e) EXCLUSION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERA-
11 PIST SERVICES FROM SKILLED NURSING FACILITY PRO-
12 SPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM.—Section 1888(e)(2)(A)(ii)
13 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395yy(e)(2)(A)(ii)) is amended
14 by inserting “marriage and family therapist services,”
15 after “qualified psychologist services,”.

16 (f) INCLUSION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERA-
17 PISTS AS PRACTITIONERS FOR ASSIGNMENT OF
18 CLAIMS.—Section 1842(b)(18)(C) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
19 1395u(b)(18)(C)) is amended by adding at the end the
20 following new clause:

21 “(vii) A marriage and family therapist (as de-
22 fined in section 1861(ww)(2)).”.

1 **SEC. 3. COVERAGE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST**
2 **SERVICES PROVIDED IN CERTAIN SETTINGS.**

3 (a) RURAL HEALTH CLINICS.—Section
4 1861(aa)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
5 1395x(aa)(1)(B)) is amended by inserting “, by a mar-
6 riage and family therapist (as defined in subsection
7 (ww)(2)),” after “by a clinical psychologist (as defined by
8 the Secretary)”.

9 (b) HOSPICE PROGRAMS.—Section
10 1861(dd)(2)(B)(i)(III) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
11 1395x(dd)(2)(B)(i)(III)) is amended by inserting “or mar-
12 riage and family therapist (as defined in subsection
13 (ww)(2))” after “social worker”.

14 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**
15 **THERAPISTS TO DEVELOP DISCHARGE PLANS**
16 **FOR POST-HOSPITAL SERVICES.**

17 Section 1861(ee)(2)(G) of the Social Security Act (42
18 U.S.C. 1395x(ee)(2)(G)) is amended by inserting “mar-
19 riage and family therapist (as defined in subsection
20 (ww)(2)),” after “social worker,”.

21 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

22 The amendments made by this Act apply with respect
23 to services furnished on or after January 1, 2004.

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