

SUBJECT: Developing a plan to transfer the operations of Austin State Hospital

COMMITTEE: Public Health — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — S. Thompson, Allison, Coleman, Frank, Guerra, Ortega,
Sheffield

0 nays

4 absent — Wray, Lucio, Price, Zedler

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 30 — 31-0

WITNESSES: No public hearing

BACKGROUND: Interested parties have noted that a recent report on the redesign of Austin State Hospital recommended the development of a plan to transfer the operations of the hospital from the Health and Human Services Commission to an academic partner.

DIGEST: SB 2111 would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish a plan under which HHSC could contract with a local public institution of higher education to transfer the operations of Austin State Hospital from HHSC to that institution.

In developing its plan, HHSC would have to consult with local public institutions of higher education, establish procedures and policies to ensure that an institution that contracted with HHSC to operate Austin State Hospital operated the hospital at a quality level that was at least equal to the quality level achieved by HHSC, and establish procedures and policies to monitor the care of affected state hospital patients.

These procedures and policies would have to ensure that HHSC could obtain and maintain information on activities carried out under the contract without violating privacy or confidentiality rules. The procedures and policies also would have to allow for HHSC to obtain and maintain

information on:

- client outcomes;
- individual and average lengths of stay, including computation of lengths of stay according to the number of days a patient was in the facility during each calendar year, regardless of discharge and readmission;
- the number of incidents in which patients were restrained or secluded;
- the number of incidents of serious assaults in the hospital setting; and
- the number of occurrences in the hospital setting involving contacts with law enforcement personnel.

SB 2111 would require HHSC to prepare and deliver to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the House speaker, and the Legislature a written report containing the plan and any recommendations for legislation or other actions by September 1, 2020.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.