

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 215                      (Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee)  
  (By Request – Departmental – Health and Mental Hygiene)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

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**Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Programs - Outcomes Evaluation**

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This departmental bill repeals the requirement for the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration to evaluate all substance abuse programs in the State. Rather, the bill establishes a requirement to evaluate publicly funded programs only – on an annual basis. In addition, the bill changes the requirements for outcome studies to conform to federal standards.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Due to the redirection of staff and resources from private program evaluation, general fund expenditures could decrease in FY 2009 and future years. No effect on revenues.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The bill abolishes the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Research Advisory Committee. In addition, the bill requires that annual program evaluations be conducted using federal outcome measures or other subsequently adopted federal standards to determine the extent that individuals who have received treatment under

these programs have • been successfully retained in the treatment program; • successfully attained, maintained, or increased their employment; • demonstrated a decrease in engaging in criminal activity; and • successfully established or maintained stable living arrangements.

**Current Law:** ADAA is charged with planning and encouraging the development and coordination of the facilities and services that offer treatment, care, or rehabilitation for alcohol and drug abusers.

ADAA has to • review and approve or disapprove each program that a public or private agency wants to offer; • promptly give the Administrative Office of the Courts notice of each program approved; • monitor and biennially review each program approved; • investigate each complaint made in connection with a program; and • promptly give the Administrative Office of the Courts notice if approval of any program is withdrawn.

ADAA evaluates each licensed or certified alcohol and drug abuse treatment program by performing outcome research studies on a representative sample of individuals who have received treatment under those programs. Required outcome measures are as follows:

- individuals who have been successfully discharged from a treatment program; and
- individuals who have successfully controlled their alcohol and drug abuse problems after discharge.

ADAA has to adopt any reasonable regulations necessary to perform the outcome research studies and ensure that the studies are conducted in a way that protects individual confidentiality. Further, an Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Research Advisory Committee, established by ADAA, is charged with developing the methodology necessary to conduct outcome research studies and advising ADAA on any reasonable regulations necessary to perform the studies.

**Background:** There are 245 publicly funded program sites and 327 nonfunded, private program sites in Maryland. DHMH advises that when the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Research Advisory Committee was created there were no standards for performance and outcome measures in substance abuse. However, there are now National Outcome Measures required by federal law.

**State Fiscal Effect:** DHMH advises that it takes two or three analysts one to three days to evaluate an alcohol and drug treatment program depending on its size, and that it cannot annually evaluate every program in the State with the seven employees designated to the task. While it does evaluate each of the 245 publicly funded programs annually, it

only evaluates the 327 private programs approximately every other year. Under the bill, staff resources allocated to private program evaluations would be redirected to other ADAAs activities. While DHMH reports no fiscal impact under the bill, Legislative Services advises that, while a reliable estimate cannot be made at this time, general fund expenditures could decrease due to halting private program evaluations.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 8, 2008  
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