

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Sue O'Connell, 406-444-3597

**Committee to Hear Mental Health Study Recommendations**

A legislative committee will hear the final report next week on a study designed to review the financing and structure of Montana's mental health system.

The report contains numerous recommendations for ways to improve coordination or funding of services and also discusses some potential financing options.

The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee will meet in Helena on Oct. 14 to hear the final report from DMA Health Strategies of Massachusetts and to act on report recommendations.

DMA was hired in February to conduct the study of the state's publicly funded mental health system.

Over the past six months, DMA has reviewed claims for payments for mental health services and traveled to Montana to interview numerous people involved in and affected by the system. The efforts were part of a study to see whether gaps in services exist, whether the state could be taking advantage of other opportunities for funding the system, and whether the system could be better coordinated among state agencies.

The 2007 Legislature appropriated \$200,000 for the study.

Committee members are Sens. Carol Juneau, D-Browning; Rick Laible, R-Darby; Terry Murphy, R-Cardwell; and Dan Weinberg, D-Whitefish; and Reps. Edith Clark, R-Sweetgrass; Ernie Dutton, R-Billings; and Teresa Henry and Diane Sands, both Missoula Democrats.

For more information, contact Sue O'Connell, legislative committee staffer, at 406-444-3597 or [soconnell@mt.gov](mailto:soconnell@mt.gov).

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