

By Senator Steube

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1 A bill to be entitled
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 certain individuals and
6 entities to provide alternative treatment options for
7 certain veterans; requiring direction and supervision
8 by certain licensed providers; authorizing the
9 department to adopt rules; providing an effective
10 date.

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12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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14 Section 1. Section 295.156, Florida Statutes, is created to
15 read:

16 295.156 Alternative treatment options for veterans.-

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

18 (a) "Accelerated resolution therapy" means a process that
19 replaces negative images and sensations with positive ones, uses
20 specific eye movements in conjunction with controlled
21 verbalization about details of the prior traumatic experience,
22 and uses metaphors and other interventions to assist the patient
23 in recalling less distressing images while retaining the facts
24 of the original experience.

25 (b) "Acupuncture" has the same meaning as provided in s.
26 457.102.

27 (c) "Acupuncturist" has the same meaning as provided in s.
28 457.102.

29 (d) "Alternative treatment" means a treatment that is not

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30 part of the standard of medical care established by the United
31 States Department of Veterans Affairs for treating traumatic
32 brain injury or posttraumatic stress disorder but has been shown
33 by at least one scientific or medical peer-reviewed study to
34 have some positive effect for the treatment of traumatic brain
35 injury or posttraumatic stress disorder.

36 (e) "Equine therapy" means the use of interaction with
37 horses under the supervision of a trained equine instructor to
38 improve the patient's sense of trust and self-efficiency;
39 increase communication, socialization, and emotional management
40 skills; and decrease isolation.

41 (f) "Hyperbaric oxygen therapy" means the use of 100-
42 percent oxygen at an increased level of atmospheric pressure to
43 promote the delivery of oxygen from the environment to the
44 patient's bloodstream, organs, and tissues.

45 (g) "Meditation therapy" means the use of physical
46 positions or relaxation techniques to encourage calm, reflective
47 thinking and self-inquiry.

48 (h) "Music therapy" means the use of music listening or
49 performance to address the patient's physical, emotional,
50 cognitive, and social needs and to facilitate communication and
51 expression.

52 (i) "Outdoor and indoor sports therapy" means the use of
53 sports involving physical activity or action to improve the
54 patient's functional, occupational, and physical fitness. The
55 term does not include any physical activity or action that may
56 result in contact with the patient's head.

57 (j) "Service animal training therapy" means a technique
58 that allows the patient to work directly with an animal trainer

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59 to train animals as therapy or service animals.

60 (k) "Yoga therapy" means the use of physical postures,
61 breathing techniques, and meditation or relaxation for the
62 purpose of reducing the patient's physical, mental, or emotional
63 stress.

64 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation, the Department of
65 Veterans' Affairs may contract with one or more individuals,
66 corporations not for profit, state universities, or Florida
67 College System institutions to provide the following alternative
68 treatment options for veterans who have been certified by the
69 United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of
70 the United States Armed Forces as having a traumatic brain
71 injury or posttraumatic stress disorder:

72 (a) Accelerated resolution therapy.

73 (b) Acupuncture, which must be provided by an
74 acupuncturist.

75 (c) Equine therapy.

76 (d) Hyperbaric oxygen therapy, which must be provided by a
77 licensed operator of a hyperbaric oxygen facility pursuant to a
78 written prescription from an individual licensed under chapter
79 458 or chapter 459.

80 (e) Meditation therapy.

81 (f) Music therapy.

82 (g) Outdoor and indoor sports therapy.

83 (h) Service animal training therapy.

84 (i) Yoga therapy.

85 (3) The provision of alternative treatment must be under
86 the direction and supervision of an individual licensed under
87 chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter 490, or chapter

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88 491.

89 (4) The Department of Veterans' Affairs may adopt rules to
90 implement this section.

91 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.