

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 679

(Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Cultural Competency and Health Literacy - Education

This bill expands the Cultural Linguistic Health Care Provider Competency Program to encompass all health care *professionals*, including pharmacists and health educators, rather than *providers* and renames the program accordingly. By December 1, 2012, universities, colleges, and higher education programs for specified healthcare professionals must report to specified committees of the General Assembly and the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities on the courses that have been developed independently or through collaboration with the office as required under the bill.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill's requirements, including coordinating with State professional and public health societies and reporting by State health care professional programs, can be handled within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The office must work collaboratively with schools of social work, public health, and allied health to develop specified courses. The Maryland Pharmacists Association and any other public health entity in the State are encouraged to identify or

develop training programs on cultural and linguistic competency. The bill also corrects the name of the Maryland Clinical Social Worker Coalition in current law.

Current Law: Chapter 414 of 2009 established a voluntary Cultural and Linguistic Health Care Provider Competency Program to offer classes to health care providers on cultural and linguistic competency as it relates to providing health care. The Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland, the State Medical Society, the Maryland Nurses Association, the Maryland State Dental Association, the Maryland Society for Clinical Social Work, the National Association of Social Workers-Maryland Chapter, the Maryland Psychological Association, or any other health professional association in the State is encouraged to identify cultural and linguistic competency training programs or, if feasible, to develop or collaborate in the development of such training programs. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene must develop a method by which each licensing board may recognize the training received by health care providers.

The office is required to work collaboratively with universities and colleges of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and dentistry and other health care professional training programs to develop courses with cultural competency, sensitivity, and health literacy that are designed to address the problems of racial and ethnic disparities in health care access, utilization, treatment decisions, quality, and outcomes.

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 - March 8, 2012
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