

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 715

(Delegate Dumais, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

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Hospitals and Health Care Facilities - Maternity Patients - Shaken Baby  
Syndrome

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This bill requires a hospital or health care facility that provides maternity and obstetrical services to provide written information about shaken baby syndrome to a maternity patient prior to the discharge of the patient's newborn or infant child from the hospital. Failure to do so may not be construed to create a private right of action.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill pertains exclusively to private sector activities.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Hospitals are required to provide a variety of educational information to patients such as: (1) a copy of the Patient's Bill of Rights; (2) information on mammograms; and (3) HIV testing information to pregnant women.

**Background:** Shaken baby syndrome is a severe form of head injury caused by violently shaking an infant or child that usually occurs in children younger than two years old. The violent shaking may result in permanent brain damage or death. Shaken baby syndrome is almost always caused by child abuse when an angry parent or caregiver shakes a baby to punish or quiet them. In rare instances, the injury may be caused accidentally by

tossing the baby in the air or jogging with a baby in a backpack. It does not result from gently bouncing or playing with a baby.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Family Health Administration, Health Services Cost Review Commission), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 20, 2004  
mh/jr Revised - House Third Reader - March 23, 2004

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