

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 434

(Delegate Morhaim)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Health General - Diseases Required to be Reported by Medical Laboratories -
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease**

This bill adds Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) to the list of diseases or conditions that medical laboratories must report to a county health officer if the laboratory is in Maryland, or to the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene if the laboratory is outside Maryland.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill's requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The director of a medical laboratory in Maryland must submit a report to the county health officer within 48 hours after an examination of a human specimen that shows evidence of any disease or condition the State requires to be reported. The director of a medical laboratory outside Maryland that performs a test on a human specimen from a person in Maryland must submit a report to the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene within 48 hours after the examination shows evidence of one of the required reportable diseases.

There are 65 diseases and conditions that medical laboratories must report to the State including: anthrax, cholera, dengue fever, measles, rabies, and tuberculosis. Chapter 359 of 2004 made several changes to this list by adding all types of arbovirus infection, pesticide-related illness, and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) to the list of reportable diseases and conditions.

Background: CJD is a rare, degenerative brain disorder. CJD symptoms typically begin to occur at about age 60. Approximately 90% of patients die within one year, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Individuals in the early stages of disease may have memory problems, behavioral changes, lack of coordination, and visual disturbances. Mental deterioration becomes pronounced as the disease progresses and involuntary movements, blindness, weakness in the extremities, and coma may occur.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 2005
ncs/jr

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