

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 596

(Senator Colburn, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and Finance

Health and Government
Operations

State Board of Physicians - Information Regarding Lyme Disease and Other
Tick-Borne Illness

This bill requires the Board of Physicians to develop and disseminate a document to all licensees regarding the most recent diagnosis and treatment information for Lyme Disease and other related tick-borne illness. The document must include the most recent information regarding the use of long-term antibiotic or antimicrobial therapy and be distributed annually.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2005

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The distribution of information regarding Lyme Disease and long-term treatment could be handled with existing Board of Physicians budgeted resources. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Background: Lyme Disease is an infection that spreads throughout the whole body. The disease begins when a type of bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* enters the skin

when a person is bitten by an infected tick. The bacteria can spread through skin and blood to reach parts of the body far from the tick bite.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, antibiotic treatment for three to four weeks with doxycycline or amoxicillin is generally effective in early disease. Some patients with Lyme Disease develop chronic symptoms that do not disappear. These symptoms can include arthritis, nerve pains, and concentration and memory problems. Later-stage Lyme Disease, particularly with objective neurological manifestations, may require treatment with intravenous ceftriaxone or penicillin for four weeks or more, depending on disease severity. In later-stage disease, treatment failures may occur and retreatment may be necessary.

Incidences of Lyme Disease occur mainly in the northeastern states. Maryland has the seventh highest infection rate in the nation, with 17.4 cases per 100,000 residents.

Current Law: None applicable.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): *Lyme Disease – HHS Programs and Resources* (June 2001), U.S. General Accounting Office; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health; Office of Administrative Hearings; Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Board of Physicians); Department of Legislative Services

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