

# HOUSE BILL 780

J1

2lr2165

---

By: **Delegates Nathan–Pulliam, Braveboy, Costa, Cullison, Donoghue, Glenn, Hubbard, Kach, A. Kelly, A. Miller, Murphy, Pena–Melnyk, Ready, Reznik, Tarrant, and Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2012

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Multicultural Health Care Equity Certification and Accreditation – Work**  
3 **Group**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Health Care Commission to convene a  
5 Work Group on multicultural health care equity certification and accreditation  
6 to provide recommendations to strengthen cultural competency and health  
7 literacy training and assessments; providing for the membership of the Work  
8 Group; requiring the Work Group to develop certain criteria, standards, and  
9 programs and to make certain recommendations; requiring the Work Group to  
10 make a certain report to certain committees of the General Assembly on or  
11 before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally  
12 relating to a Work Group on multicultural health care equity certification and  
13 accreditation.

14 Preamble

15 WHEREAS, The Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council concluded that  
16 Maryland continues to lag behind other states on a number of key health indicators;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Health literacy is a determinant of health for below–basic readers  
19 as well as proficient readers, and one–third of Maryland’s population measures at or  
20 below basic in health literacy; and

21 WHEREAS, Health Literacy Maryland affirmed the urgency of implementing  
22 the National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy goal to promote changes in the  
23 health care system that improve health information, communication, informed  
24 decision making, and access to health services; and

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, The culturally competent health care professional must respect not  
2 only the patient's culture and health beliefs, but also the patient's ability to  
3 understand the health information being provided; and

4 WHEREAS, The population of Maryland is changing rapidly and residents are  
5 becoming more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and language; and

6 WHEREAS, Forty percent of Maryland's population is composed of racial and  
7 ethnic minorities, representing a one-third increase in diversity in the past 10 years;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Thirty-one percent of graduating medical students report having  
10 no experience related to cultural competency training during their medical school  
11 education; and

12 WHEREAS, The patient-centered medical home will be Maryland's primary  
13 care health care delivery setting to eliminate disparities in health care outcomes; and

14 WHEREAS, By eliminating disparities in health care outcomes, Maryland  
15 employers stand to benefit in both direct and indirect ways; now, therefore,

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
17 MARYLAND, That:

18 (a) (1) The Maryland Health Care Commission shall convene a Work  
19 Group on multicultural health care equity certification and accreditation to provide  
20 recommendations to strengthen cultural competency and health literacy training and  
21 assessments.

22 (2) The Work Group shall include representatives of:

23 (i) the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health  
24 Disparities;

25 (ii) the Maryland Hospital Association;

26 (iii) the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's health  
27 occupations boards;

28 (iv) health care providers, including at least one primary care  
29 physician, one nurse, and one allied health professional;

30 (v) academic centers of health literacy and academic centers for  
31 health disparities research; and

32 (vi) accreditation agencies, including The Joint Commission, the  
33 National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), and the URAC.

1           (3) The Work Group may include any other individual or entity  
2 determined appropriate by the Maryland Health Care Commission.

3           (b) The Work Group shall:

4           (1) develop multicultural health care equity criteria, standards, and  
5 assessment programs for patient-centered medical homes, hospitals, managed care  
6 plans, and nursing homes;

7           (2) develop criteria and standards to measure the impact of  
8 patient-centered medical homes on eliminating disparities in health care outcomes in  
9 multicultural populations as defined in the Institute of Medicine's 2002 report  
10 "Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care"; and

11           (3) recommend criteria for health care providers in the State to receive  
12 continuing education in multicultural health care, including cultural competency and  
13 health literacy training.

14           (c) On or before January 1, 2013, the Work Group shall report its findings  
15 and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
16 Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee, in  
17 accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

18           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
19 June 1, 2012. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of May 31,  
20 2013, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be  
21 abrogated and of no further force and effect.