

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 780 (Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, *et al.*)  
Health and Government Operations

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**Multicultural Health Care Equity Certification and Accreditation - Work Group**

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This bill requires the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to convene a workgroup on multicultural health care equity certification and accreditation to provide recommendations to strengthen cultural competency and health literacy training and assessments. The workgroup must report its findings and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly by January 1, 2013.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2012, and terminates May 31, 2013.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MHCC can use existing resources to convene the workgroup and submit the required report.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The workgroup must include representatives of the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, the Maryland Hospital Association, DHMH's health occupations boards, specified health care providers, academic centers of health literacy and academic centers for health disparities research, and specified accreditation agencies. In addition, the workgroup may include any other individual or entity determined to be appropriate by MHCC.

The workgroup is required to:

- develop multicultural health care equity criteria, standards, and assessment programs for patient-centered medical homes, hospitals, managed care plans, and nursing homes;
- develop criteria and standards to measure the impact of patient-centered medical homes on eliminating disparities in health care outcomes in multicultural populations as defined in a specified report; and
- recommend criteria for health care providers in the State to receive continuing education in multicultural health care, including cultural competency and health literacy training.

**Current Law/Background:** 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, and other health professional associations in the State are encouraged to identify cultural and linguistic competency training programs or, if feasible, to develop or collaborate in the development of such training programs. DHMH must develop a method by which each licensing board may recognize the training received by health care providers.

The Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities 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.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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