

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 307 (Senator Washington, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Pediatric Stroke - Awareness, Training, and Resource Materials (Laney Jaymes Fitzsimmons Act)

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to promote awareness in and provide training for directors of student services in local school systems regarding pediatric stroke. MDH must provide to MSDE resource information regarding pediatric stroke to be distributed to local school supervisors of health.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None, as explained below.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Background:

Lelaina “Laney” Jaymes Fitzsimons

At three years and nine months old [Laney Jaymes Fitzsimons](#) suddenly, with no prior signs of neurological disease, started having mini-strokes due to an extremely rare and aggressive vascular condition affecting the brain. These were misdiagnosed as seizures and she was treated for epilepsy. Just two weeks after the first mini-stroke, Laney had her first of many massive strokes. Following another massive stroke, Laney succumbed to her illness March 27, 2017.

Pediatric Stroke

Stroke is usually associated with the elderly; however, stroke can occur before birth, in infants, children, and young adults. According to the [Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association](#) the risk of stroke in children is highest in the first year of life and peaks during the perinatal period (a few weeks before and after birth). According to the preamble of the bill, early diagnosis and treatment of pediatric stroke greatly improves the chance of recovery and preventing recurrence.

The symptoms and clinical presentation of pediatric stroke are different for children than they are for adults and the symptoms can vary by age. The most common early sign of pediatric stroke is seizures. Other warning signs in children are a drooping face, arm weakness, and speech difficulty.

About half of all children who have a stroke had a previously identified risk factor. According to the [American Stroke Association](#), sickle cell anemia or acquired heart disease are the most common underlying risk factors.

State Fiscal Effect: MDH must provide resource information to MSDE on pediatric stroke to be distributed to local school supervisors of health. MDH advises that a half-time contractual research analyst is required to research and verify information on pediatric stroke. The Department of Legislative Services advises that this can likely be done using existing MDH staff; however, staff resources may need to be temporarily diverted from other MDH responsibilities and priorities.

MSDE advises that the MSDE Student Services Branch meets with Directors of Student Services and Directors of School Health Services several times a year; thus, these local school system staff can receive the information required using existing resources and processes.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 668 of 2018 passed the House and received a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee, but no further action was taken.

Cross File: HB 434 (Delegate K. Young, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Baltimore City Public Schools; American Heart Association; American Stroke

Association; Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association; Laney Jaymes Foundation for Pediatric Stroke; Department of Legislative Services

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