By: Delegates Patterson, Crutchfield, Henson, Howell, R. Jones, Kaiser, and McComas

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2022
Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Public Health – Sickle Cell Disease and Trait – Information for Individuals and Health Care Practitioners

FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Health to establish and implement a system of providing information on the sickle cell trait or the thalassemia trait to certain individuals; requiring the Department to maintain on its website a certain list of resources for health care practitioners and establish a plan for updating its website to meet certain requirements; requiring the State Board of Nursing and the State Board of Physicians to include certain information related to the list of resources in the renewal notices sent to licensees; and generally relating to information for individuals and health care practitioners on sickle cell disease and trait.

BY adding to

Article – Health – General
Section 18–508 and 18–509
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Health Occupations
Section 8–312(b) and 14–316(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Health – General
18–508.

(A) The Department shall establish and implement a system of providing information on the sickle cell trait or the thalassemia trait to:

(1) An individual who has the sickle cell trait or the thalassemia trait, including as determined through a newborn screening under § 18–502 of this subtitle; and

(2) If the individual is a minor, the individual’s family.

(B) The Department shall include the following in the information provided under subsection (A) of this section:

(1) How the sickle cell trait or the thalassemia trait impacts the health of an individual with the trait; and

(2) How the sickle cell trait or the thalassemia trait is passed from a parent to a child.

18–509.

The Department shall maintain in a conspicuous location on its website a list of resources for health care practitioners to use to improve their understanding and clinical treatment of individuals with sickle cell disease or the sickle cell trait, including information on the health impacts of carrying the sickle cell trait.

Article – Health Occupations

8–312.

(b) (1) At least 3 months before a license expires, the Board shall send to the licensee a renewal notice by:

(i) First-class mail to the last known mailing address of the licensee; or

(ii) Electronic means to the last known electronic address of the licensee.

(2) The renewal notice sent under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall include a notice to the licensee that:
(I) The Department maintains on its website information on sickle cell disease and the sickle cell trait; and

(II) Includes the address of the webpage on the website on which the information is maintained in accordance with §18–509 of the Health–General Article.

If a licensee is required to have a criminal history records check before a license may be renewed, the Board shall send the licensee the documents necessary for initiating the criminal history records check in conjunction with the renewal notice required under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(b) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, at least 1 month before the license expires, the Board shall send to the licensee, by electronic or first-class mail to the last known electronic or physical address of the licensee:

(i) A renewal notice that states:

1. The date on which the current license expires;

2. The date by which the renewal application must be received by the Board for the renewal to be issued and mailed before the license expires; and

3. The amount of the renewal fee; [and]

(ii) A blank panel data sheet supplied by the Health Care Alternative Dispute Resolution Office; and

(III) A notice to the licensee that:

1. The Department maintains on its website information on sickle cell disease and the sickle cell trait; and

2. Includes the address of the webpage on the website on which the information is maintained in accordance with §18–509 of the Health–General Article.

If the Board chooses to send renewal notices exclusively by electronic mail under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Board shall send a renewal notice by first-class mail to a licensee on request of the licensee.
SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before April 1, 2023, the Maryland Department of Health shall establish a plan to update its website to reflect the information required under § 18–509 of the Health – General Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, including a timeline for when the updates will be available on the website.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2022.