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HOUSE BILL NO. 1841

Offered January 12, 2011

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A BILL to amend and reenact § 32.1-11.5 of the Code of Virginia, relating to annual reporting on pilot programs for obstetrical and pediatric care in underserved areas.

Patron—Howell, A.T.

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 32.1-11.5 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 32.1-11.5. Pilot programs for obstetrical and pediatric care in underserved areas.

A. The Board may approve pilot programs to improve access to (i) obstetrical care, which for the purposes of this section includes prenatal, delivery, and post-partum care; and (ii) pediatric care in areas of the Commonwealth where these services are severely limited. The proposals for such pilot programs shall be jointly developed and submitted to the Board by nurse practitioners licensed in the category of certified nurse midwife, certain perinatal centers as determined by the Board, obstetricians, family physicians, and pediatricians.

B. Nurse practitioners licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife who participate in a pilot program shall associate with perinatal centers recommended by the Board and community obstetricians, family physicians, and pediatricians and, notwithstanding any provision of law or regulation to the contrary, shall not be required to have physician supervision to provide obstetrical services to women with low-risk pregnancies who consent to receive care under the pilot program arrangements. Further, notwithstanding any provision of law or regulation to the contrary, a nurse practitioner licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife holding a license for prescriptive authority may prescribe Schedules III through VI controlled substances without the requirement for either medical direction or supervision or a written agreement between the licensed nurse practitioner and a licensed physician. Such perinatal center shall provide administrative oversight by (i) assisting in the development of appropriate clinical care protocols and clinical collaboration, (ii) accepting transfers when necessary, and (iii) providing clinical consultation when requested. Removal of the requirement for physician supervision for participating nurse practitioners licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife shall not extend beyond the pilot programs or be granted to certified nurse midwives who do not participate in approved pilot programs. Further, the removal of the requirement of physician supervision shall not authorize nurse practitioners licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife to provide care to women with high-risk pregnancies or care that is not directly related to a low-risk pregnancy and delivery. Nurse practitioners licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife participating in a pilot program shall maintain professional liability insurance as recommended by the Division of Risk Management of the Department of the Treasury.

C. The Department shall convene stakeholders, including nurse practitioners licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing in the category of certified nurse midwife, obstetricians, family physicians and pediatricians to establish protocols to be used in the pilot programs no later than October 1, 2005. The protocols shall include a uniform risk-screening tool for pregnant women to assure that women are referred to the appropriate provider based on their risk factors.

D. Pilot program proposals submitted for areas where access to obstetrical and pediatric care services is severely limited shall include mutually agreed upon protocols consistent with evidence-based practice and based on national standards that describe criteria for risk assessment, referral, and backup and shall also document how the pilot programs will evaluate their model and quality of care.

E. Pilot sites that elect to include birthing centers as part of the system of care shall be in close proximity to a health care facility equipped to perform emergency surgery, if needed. Birthing centers are facilities outside hospitals that provide maternity services. Any birthing center that is part of the pilot program shall, at a minimum, maintain membership in the National Association of Childbearing Centers and annually submit such information as may be required by the Commissioner. The pilot programs shall not provide or promote home births.

F. The Department shall evaluate and report on the impact and effectiveness of the pilot programs in meeting the program goals. The evaluation shall include the number of births, the number of referrals for emergency treatment services, successes and problems encountered, the overall operation of the pilot

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59 programs, and recommendations for improvement of the program. The Department shall submit a report
60 to the Joint Commission on Health Care by November 15, 2006, and annually thereafter.