



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Raised Bill No. 1342

LCO No. 4460

04460_____PH_

Referred to Committee on Public Health

Introduced by:
(PH)

**AN ACT CONCERNING LINGUISTIC ACCESS IN HOSPITALS AND
CONTINUING EDUCATION IN CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC
COMPETENCE.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 19a-490i of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2007*):

3 (a) Each acute care hospital in this state shall:

4 (1) Develop and annually review a policy on the provision of
5 interpreter services to non-English-speaking patients;

6 (2) Ensure, to the extent possible, the availability of interpreter
7 services to patients whose primary language is spoken by a group
8 comprising not less than five per cent of the population residing in the
9 geographic area served by the hospital;

10 (3) Prepare and maintain a list of qualified interpreters;

11 (4) Notify hospital staff of the requirement to provide interpreters to
12 non-English-speaking patients;

13 (5) Post multilingual notices of the availability of interpreters to

14 non-English-speaking patients;

15 (6) Review standardized forms to determine the need for translation
16 for use by non-English-speaking patients;

17 (7) Consider providing hospital staff with picture and phrase sheets
18 for communication with non-English-speaking patients; and

19 (8) Establish liaisons to non-English-speaking communities in the
20 geographic area served by the hospital.

21 (b) The Department of Public Health shall (1) monitor and enforce
22 hospital compliance with the requirements set forth in subsection (a) of
23 this section, (2) examine the effectiveness of such requirements, and (3)
24 on or before January 1, 2009, and biennially thereafter, report to the
25 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance
26 of matters relating to public health, in accordance with the provisions
27 of section 11-4a, on any findings and recommendations regarding how
28 to improve linguistic access standards in acute care hospitals.

29 Sec. 2. (NEW) *(Effective October 1, 2007)* On or before October 1, 2008,
30 the Department of Public Health shall establish a training and
31 certification program in cultural and linguistic competence for medical
32 interpreters.

33 Sec. 3. (NEW) *(Effective October 1, 2007)* The Department of Public
34 Health shall (1) collect and track data on the race and ethnicity of all
35 health care professionals licensed in this state, and (2) on or before
36 December 31, 2008, and annually thereafter, report, in accordance with
37 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the diversity
38 of the state's health care workforce to the joint standing committee of
39 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public
40 health.

41 Sec. 4. (NEW) *(Effective October 1, 2007)* (a) As used in this section:

42 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Public Health;

43 (2) "Contact hour" means a minimum of fifty minutes of continuing
44 education activity;

45 (3) "Department" means the Department of Public Health;

46 (4) "Licensee" means any person who receives a license from the
47 department pursuant to chapter 370, 372, 373, 375, 375a, 376, 376a,
48 376b, 376c, 377, 378, 379, 379a, 380, 381, 381a, 381b, 383, 383a, 383b,
49 383c, 384, 384a, 384b, 384c, 384d, 385, 398 or 399 of the general statutes;
50 and

51 (5) "Registration period" means the one-year period for which a
52 license renewed in accordance with section 19a-88 of general statutes is
53 current and valid.

54 (b) Except as otherwise provided in this section, for registration
55 periods beginning on and after October 1, 2008, a licensee applying for
56 license renewal shall earn a minimum of ____ contact hours of
57 continuing education in cultural and linguistic competencies within
58 the preceding registration period.

59 (c) Each licensee applying for license renewal pursuant to section
60 19a-88 of the general statutes shall sign a statement attesting that he or
61 she has satisfied the continuing education requirements of subsection
62 (b) of this section on a form prescribed by the department. Each
63 licensee shall retain records of attendance or certificates of completion
64 that demonstrate compliance with the continuing education
65 requirements of said subsection (b) for a minimum of five years
66 following the year in which the continuing education activities were
67 completed and shall submit such records to the department for
68 inspection not later than forty-five days after a request by the
69 department for such records.

70 (d) A licensee applying for the first time for license renewal
71 pursuant to section 19a-88 of general statutes is exempt from the
72 continuing education requirements of this section.

73 (e) In individual cases involving medical disability or illness, the
 74 commissioner may, in the commissioner's discretion, grant a waiver of
 75 the continuing education requirements or an extension of time within
 76 which to fulfill the continuing education requirements of this section to
 77 any licensee, provided the licensee submits to the department an
 78 application for waiver or extension of time on a form prescribed by the
 79 department, along with a certification by a licensed physician of the
 80 disability or illness and such other documentation as may be required
 81 by the commissioner. The commissioner may grant a waiver or
 82 extension for a period not to exceed one registration period, except that
 83 the commissioner may grant additional waivers or extensions if the
 84 medical disability or illness upon which a waiver or extension is
 85 granted continues beyond the period of the waiver or extension and
 86 the licensee applies for an additional waiver or extension.

87 (f) Any licensee whose license has become void pursuant to section
 88 19a-88 of the general statutes and who applies to the department for
 89 reinstatement of such license pursuant to section 19a-14 of the general
 90 statutes shall submit evidence documenting successful completion of
 91 ___ contact hours of qualifying continuing education within the one-
 92 year period immediately preceding application for reinstatement.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2007</i>	19a-490i
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2007</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To improve linguistic access services in acute care hospitals, and to reduce misdiagnoses due to linguistic barriers.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]