

CHAPTER 205

AN ACT concerning minority and multicultural health, amending the title and body of P.L.1991, c.401 and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

Title amended.

1. The title of P.L.1991, c.401 is amended to read as follows:

AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health.

2. Section 1 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-160) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-160 Findings, declarations relative to minority and multicultural health.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. There are dramatic differences in death, disease and injury rates between White and racial and ethnic minority populations in the State, with especially wide and persistent disparities in the incidence of cancer, cardiovascular disease and stroke, chemical dependency, diabetes, asthma, homicide, suicide, accidental injury, infant mortality, child immunization rates and HIV/AIDS;

b. There is a clear need for a collaborative State effort to address the wide disparity in death, disease and injury rates through a New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health, renamed from the New Jersey Office on Minority Health established pursuant to P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-160 et seq.); and

c. The New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health shall seek to identify and develop innovative projects which will eliminate the gap between the health status of White and racial and ethnic minority populations in this State, and to coordinate current State programs which seek to address minority racial and ethnic health concerns, with the ultimate goal of enabling all members of racial and ethnic minority populations in this State to have access to high-quality health care.

3. Section 2 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-161) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-161 New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health.

2. a. There is established the New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health in the Department of Health and Senior Services.

b. Whenever the term "New Jersey Office on Minority Health" occurs or any reference is made thereto in any law, contract or document, the same shall be deemed to mean or refer to the "New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health."

4. Section 3 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-162) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-162 Duties of the office.

3. The office shall:

a. Provide grants to community-based organizations to conduct special research, demonstration and evaluation projects for targeted at-risk racial and ethnic minority populations and to support ongoing community-based programs that are designed to reduce or eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in the State;

b. Develop and implement model public and private partnerships in racial and ethnic minority communities for health awareness campaigns and to improve the access, acceptability and use of public health services;

c. Serve as an information and resource center for racial and ethnic minority specific health information and data and develop a clearinghouse to collate and organize data on a county-by-county basis and disseminate it upon request to interested parties;

d. Review, recommend and develop culturally appropriate health education materials;

e. Provide assistance to local school districts to develop programs in elementary and secondary schools which stress good nutrition and healthy lifestyles;

f. Function as an advocate for the adoption and implementation of effective measures to improve the health of racial and ethnic minority populations in this State, which measures should

lead to the elimination of disparities among the various racial and ethnic populations of this State with respect to access to high-quality health care, utilization of health care services and health status;

g. Improve existing data systems to ensure that the health information that is collected includes specific race and ethnicity identifiers;

h. Review the programs of the Departments of Health and Senior Services, Human Services, Community Affairs and Education and any other department of State government, as appropriate, that concern multicultural or minority health and make recommendations to the departments that will enable them to better coordinate and improve the effectiveness of their efforts;

i. Develop a Statewide plan for increasing the number of racial and ethnic minority health care professionals which includes recommendations for the financing mechanisms and recruitment strategies necessary to carry out the plan;

j. Work collaboratively with colleges of medicine and dentistry in this State and other health care professional training programs to develop cultural and language competency courses that are designed to address the problem of racial and ethnicity disparities in health care access, utilization, treatment decisions, quality and outcomes;

k. Develop recommendations for the most effective means of providing outreach to racial and ethnic minority communities throughout the State to ensure their maximum participation in publicly funded health benefits programs;

l. Seek to establish a Statewide alliance with community-based agencies and organizations, health care facilities, health care provider organizations, managed care organizations and pharmaceutical manufacturers to promote the objectives of the office; and

m. Evaluate multicultural or racial and ethnic minority health programs in other states to assess their efficacy and potential for replication in this State and make recommendations regarding the adoption of such programs, as appropriate.

5. Section 4 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-163) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-163 Powers of the office.

4. The office is authorized to:

a. Adopt rules and regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), concerning the operation of the office and other matters that may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act;

b. Maintain offices at such places within the State as it may designate;

c. Employ a director and other personnel as may be necessary. The director shall be appointed by the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services and shall serve at the pleasure of the commissioner during the commissioner's term of office and until the appointment and qualification of the director's successor. The director shall devote his entire time to the duties of the position and shall receive a salary as provided by law;

d. Apply for and accept any grant of money from the federal government, private foundations or other sources, which may be available for programs related to multicultural or minority health;

e. Serve as the designated State agency for receipt of federal funds specifically designated for multicultural or racial and ethnic minority health programs; and

f. Enter into contracts with individuals, organizations, and institutions necessary for the performance of its duties under this act. (cf: P.L.1991, c.401, s.4)

6. Section 5 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-164) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-164 New Jersey Office on Minority or Multicultural Health Advisory Commission.

5. There is established a New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health Advisory Commission.

The commission shall consist of nine members, including the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services or his designee, who shall serve ex officio, and eight public members who are

residents of the State and who shall be appointed as follows: one member who is a health care professional shall be appointed by the President of the Senate; one member who is a health care professional shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and six members, at least two of whom are health care professionals, at least one of whom represents health care facilities and at least one of whom represents the health insurance industry, shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The term of office of each public member shall be three years, but of the members first appointed, two shall be appointed for a term of one year, three shall be appointed for a term of two years and three shall be appointed for a term of three years. A member shall hold office for the term of his appointment and until his successor has been appointed and qualified. All vacancies shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. A member of the commission is eligible for reappointment.

The public members of the commission shall not receive any compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the commission, within the limits of funds available to the commission.

The members of the commission shall annually elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among the public members and may select a secretary, who need not be a member of the commission.

The New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health shall provide such staff and assistance as the commission requires to carry out its work.

7. Section 6 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-165) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-165 Duties of advisory commission.

6. The advisory commission shall:

- a. Review and make recommendations to the New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health on any rules, regulations and policies proposed by the office;
- b. Advise the office on the awarding of grants and development of programs and services required pursuant to this act;
- c. Advise the office on the needs, priorities, programs and policies relating to multicultural or racial and ethnic minority health in this State; and
- d. Provide any other assistance to the office, as may be requested by the director.

The commission may accept from any governmental department or agency, public or private body or any other source grants or contributions to be used in carrying out its responsibilities under this act.

8. Section 8 of P.L.1991, c.401 (C.26:2-167) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:2-167 Assistance of public agencies.

8. The office is entitled to call to its assistance, and avail itself of, the services of employees of any State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes. All departments, agencies and divisions are authorized and directed, to the extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate with the New Jersey Office on Minority and Multicultural Health.

9. a. There is appropriated \$1,500,000 from the General Fund to the Office on Minority and Multicultural Health in the Department of Health and Senior Services to carry out its responsibilities pursuant to this act. The monies appropriated pursuant to this act shall supplement any funding currently available to the office.

b. It is the intent of the Legislature that in succeeding fiscal years, the Governor shall recommend and the Legislature shall appropriate \$1,500,000 from the General Fund to the Office on Minority and Multicultural Health to carry out its responsibilities under this act. This amount shall be in addition to any amounts allocated to the office in fiscal year 2001 pursuant to P.L.2000, c.53.

10. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 8, 2001.