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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1442 Session of  
1999

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INTRODUCED BY L. I. COHEN, BARD, BEBKO-JONES, BENNINGHOFF,  
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MAY 4, 1999

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, MAY 4, 1999

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AN ACT

1 Requiring the Department of Health to pay for education programs  
2 relating to anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-  
3 eating disorders.

4 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

5 (1) Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are emotional  
6 diseases that evolve slowly and lead to deterioration of the  
7 human body.

8 (2) Five percent of adolescent and adult women and one  
9 percent of men have an eating disorder.

10 (3) Fifteen percent of young women have substantially  
11 disordered eating attitudes and behaviors.

12 (4) Patients in the early stages (less than six months)  
13 may be successfully treated without being admitted to the  
14 hospital, but patients with more serious problems need care  
15 in a hospital.

16 (5) Treatment involves more than changing eating habits;

1 in addition, it involves a comprehensive overview of an  
2 individual's emotional state through counseling and a medical  
3 decision as to whether or not medicine must be prescribed for  
4 the patient.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Eating  
9 Disorder Prevention and Treatment Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

11 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
12 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Anorexia nervosa." A disorder in which preoccupation with  
15 dieting and thinness leads to excessive weight loss. The  
16 individual may not acknowledge that weight loss or restricted  
17 eating is a problem.

18 "Bulimia nervosa." Involves frequent episodes of binge  
19 eating which is always followed by purging and intense feelings  
20 of guilt, shame and being out of control.

21 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

22 "Health care provider." A physician, registered nurse,  
23 dentist, podiatrist, psychologist, physical therapist, certified  
24 registered nurse practitioner, physician's assistant,  
25 chiropractor, home health provider, hospital, rehabilitation  
26 hospital or long-term care provider.

27 "Program." The Eating Disorder Prevention and Treatment  
28 Program established by this act.

29 Section 3. Eating Disorder Prevention and Treatment Program.

30 (a) Establishment.--The department shall establish the

1 Eating Disorder Prevention and Treatment Program in accordance  
2 with this act.

3 (b) Administration.--In the administration of the program,  
4 the department shall have the following duties:

5 (1) The department shall provide staff support and  
6 departmental resources as necessary to implement the program.

7 (2) The department shall identify appropriate public and  
8 nonpublic entities to assist in the implementation and  
9 operation of the program.

10 (3) The department shall collect and maintain up-to-date  
11 scientific and other information that will increase public  
12 awareness and contribute to education programs, including,  
13 but not limited to, risk factors, appropriate diet and  
14 exercise, diagnostic procedures, Food and Drug  
15 Administration-approved drug therapies, rehabilitation and  
16 safety and injury prevention measures.

17 (4) The department shall develop relationships with  
18 governmental agencies, community and business leaders,  
19 community organizations, health care and human service  
20 providers and national eating disorder organizations to  
21 coordinate efforts and maximize public and private resources  
22 in the areas of prevention, education and treatment.

23 (5) The department shall use various methods for raising  
24 public awareness of the causes and effects of eating  
25 disorders, personal risk factors, prevention, early diagnosis  
26 and treatment, including, but not limited to:

27 (i) An outreach campaign utilizing print, radio and  
28 television public service announcements, advertisements,  
29 posters and other materials; distribution of information  
30 at public events, community forums, targeting of at-risk

1 populations and provision of reliable information to  
2 policymakers.

3 (ii) Distribution of information through county and  
4 district health offices, city and county health  
5 departments, schools, employer wellness programs, health  
6 care providers, insurers, including health maintenance  
7 organizations and nonprofit and community organizations.

8 (6) The department shall use methods to educate  
9 consumers of eating disorder services, including, but not  
10 limited to:

11 (i) The procurement of brochures, videotapes and  
12 other materials.

13 (ii) The establishment of a Statewide capacity to  
14 provide information on all aspects of eating disorders.

15 (iii) The procurement of educational information to  
16 consumers of eating disorder-related services through the  
17 use of toll-free number.

18 (7) The department shall develop and maintain a  
19 repository of information provided to the department  
20 regarding the following:

21 (i) Research programs information and technical  
22 assistance for health care and human service providers  
23 and organizations.

24 (ii) Services that may be required by eating  
25 disorder patients.

26 (iii) Information on types of services available to  
27 eating disorder patients in this Commonwealth.

28 (iv) Information received from health-care providers  
29 relating to the number and location of appropriate eating  
30 disorder support group and treatment facilities in this

1 Commonwealth.

2 (v) The department shall provide health care and  
3 health service providers and organizations with  
4 information regarding the contents of the repository and  
5 procedures to access the information maintained in the  
6 repository.

7 (c) Technical assistance.--The department shall provide  
8 technical assistance regarding the development of eating  
9 disorders programs and materials, including, but not limited to,  
10 the extent specified in this section.

11 Section 4. Effective date.

12 This act shall take effect in 60 days.