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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 274 Session of  
2003

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INTRODUCED BY CAPPELLI, BAKER, BELARDI, BELFANTI, BISHOP,  
BROWNE, BUNT, CAWLEY, CLYMER, CORRIGAN, CRAHALLA, CRUZ,  
CURRY, DeWEESE, EACHUS, J. EVANS, FAIRCHILD, GEIST, GEORGE,  
HARHAI, HENNESSEY, HERMAN, HORSEY, JAMES, KIRKLAND, LAUGHLIN,  
LEACH, MACKERETH, MAITLAND, MARKOSEK, McILHATTAN, McNAUGHTON,  
NAILOR, NICKOL, ROSS, SAINATO, SATHER, SOLOBAY, E. Z. TAYLOR,  
THOMAS, TIGUE, VANCE, WILT AND YOUNGBLOOD, FEBRUARY 12, 2003

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
FEBRUARY 12, 2003

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AN ACT

1 Directing the Department of Public Welfare to resolve the  
2 shortage of appropriate accessible dental care services for  
3 individuals with mental retardation residing in the  
4 community.

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 Dental Care  
9 for Individuals with Mental Retardation 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 "Department." The Department of Public Welfare of the  
15 Commonwealth.

16 "Eligible population." Individuals who are receiving

1 services through county mental retardation programs.

2 "Health Care Quality Unit" or "HCQU." Entities established  
3 through the Office of Mental Retardation in the Department of  
4 Public Welfare which are responsible to county mental  
5 retardation programs for the overall health status of  
6 individuals receiving services in the county programs.

7 Section 3. General rule.

8 The department, in consultation with the Department of Health  
9 and the Pennsylvania Dental Association, through HCQUs, shall:

10 (1) Assess the availability and accessibility of  
11 appropriate dental care for eligible individuals.

12 (2) Assess the training needs of dentists and dental  
13 professionals in treating eligible individuals and develop  
14 training programs as appropriate.

15 (3) Provide education and technical assistance to  
16 counties to access existing State grants and other resources  
17 to develop dental services for eligible individuals.

18 (4) Provide technical assistance to counties in  
19 developing appropriate dental services for eligible  
20 individuals.

21 Section 4. Part-time provision.

22 A part-time consulting dentist shall be included as part of  
23 the recommended staffing for the HCQU serving a single county or  
24 multicounty partnership.

25 Section 5. Duty of department.

26 The department shall provide eligible individuals who reside  
27 in the community access to dental care in State-operated mental  
28 retardation centers if there is no other accessible appropriate  
29 dental care available in the eligible individual's community.

30 Section 6. Effective date.

1       This act shall take effect in 60 days.