

Amend **CSHB 916** by adding the following appropriately numbered section to the bill, and renumber subsequent sections as appropriate:

SECTION _____. (a) In this Act, "medically underserved community" means a community that has been designated under state or federal law as a health professional shortage area.

(b) The statewide health coordinating council in conjunction with area health education centers shall study the health care delivery system in five geographically diverse medically underserved communities of the state who request to be part of the study. Four of the communities must be located in a county with a population of 50,000 or less. One of the communities must be located in an urban county. As part of the study the Department of State Health Services shall:

(1) identify the ways in which nonphysician health care providers are being used to supplement the provision of health care services in medically underserved communities;

(2) determine which medically underserved communities of the state have been successful and unsuccessful in recruiting and retaining physicians to practice in the community;

(3) identify the nonphysician health care providers who could, within the scope of the health care providers' license, certification, or registration, supplement the provision of health care services in medically underserved communities;

(4) examine whether alternative supervision of nonphysician health care providers or delivery of services by nonphysician health care providers in nontraditional settings would provide a benefit in the delivery of health care services in medically underserved communities;

(5) examine whether each community is medically underserved as a result of a shortage of providers, a shortage of appropriate health care facilities, or both; and

(6) evaluate the measures each medically underserved community has taken to resolve the health professional shortage in the community, determine whether those measures have been successful in reducing the shortage, and identify innovative solutions that should be replicated.

(c) In performing the study under Subsection (b) of this section, the Department of State Health Services shall consult with a variety of the health care practitioners in medically underserved communities, including emergency medical service providers, physicians, nonphysician health care providers, rural hospitals, rural health clinics, and family planning clinics.

(d) The Department of State Health Services shall seek the participation of, and consult with, representatives of each medically underserved community in the study to develop ways the community can improve the delivery of health care services.

(e) Not later than January 1, 2007, the Department of State Health Services shall report the results of the study conducted under this section in writing to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the members and members-elect of the 80th Legislature. The report must include any proposed legislation the department, through this study, determines will facilitate the improvement of the delivery of health care in medically underserved communities.

(f) This Act expires September 1, 2007.