

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1240  
By: Villarreal  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, on release from the hospital after the birth of a child, a parent leaves without critical information that may assist the parent in providing for the child's development, health, and safety. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) projects that over 400,000 children will be born in Texas in 2009. The first few years of life are critical to a child's cognitive development, and a parent is most often a child's first teacher. A parent who is equipped with the proper tools to aid a child's cognitive development will enable that child to enter academic institutions better prepared. A recent study shows that a child who receives early childhood education materials exhibits higher readiness for kindergarten, especially a child who has special needs or whose family is economically disadvantaged.

C.S.H.B. 1240 requires a resource guide to be given to a parent or other primary caregiver on discharge from the hospital in addition to other required materials, if the mother is a recipient of the Texas Medical Assistance program. Developed as a result of a collaboration between the HHSC and several prominent children's organizations, the resource guide is intended for a parent of a child from birth to five years of age. The guide would bridge the information gap that currently exists by providing information regarding selecting and interacting with a primary health care practitioner, establishing a "medical home" for a child, as well as information relating to dental care, effective parenting, child safety, the importance of reading to a child, expected developmental milestones, health care and other resources available to parents in Texas, and selecting appropriate child care. The bill requires HHSC to develop performance measures to evaluate the guide and report to the legislature on the guide's effectiveness.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1240 amends the Health and Safety Code to require a hospital, birthing center, physician, nurse midwife, or midwife who provides prenatal care to a pregnant woman during gestation or at delivery of an infant to provide the woman and the father of the infant, if possible, or another adult caregiver with, among other things, a resource guide that includes information in both English and Spanish relating to the development, health, and safety of a child from birth until age five, if the woman is a recipient of assistance under the Medicaid program. The bill requires the resource guide to include information relating to selecting and interacting with a primary health care practitioner and establishing a "medical home" for the child, dental care, effective parenting, child safety, the importance of reading to a child, expected developmental milestones, health care resources available in Texas, selecting appropriate child care, and other resources available in Texas. The bill authorizes a hospital, birthing center, physician, nurse midwife, or midwife to use the guide on the website of the Department of State Health Services or an alternative guide.

C.S.H.B. 1240 authorizes the department to make available online and distribute an existing publication created by another health and human services agency as the resource guide. The bill requires the department to make available online a printable version of the resource guide and to make the guide available for distribution to health care providers. The bill authorizes the department to include additional information in the guide as appropriate for the parents of newborns, and makes conforming changes.

C.S.H.B. 1240 requires the Health and Human Services Commission to develop specific performance measures by which the commission may evaluate the effectiveness of the resource guide in reducing costs to the state and improving outcomes for children. The bill requires the commission, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit a report to the legislature on the effectiveness of the resource guide, including legislative recommendations concerning the guide.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2009.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 1240 differs from the original by adding the condition that a pregnant woman required to be provided the resource guide be a recipient of assistance under the Medicaid program. The bill makes a conforming change to clarify that the woman's record must document that the woman received the resource guide in addition to the resource pamphlet, if applicable.

C.S.H.B. 1240 differs from the original by adding the requirements that the Health and Human Services Commission develop the performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the resource guide and submit the corresponding report to the legislature.