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H.B. No. 1295

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a health literacy plan developed by the statewide health coordinating council and the inclusion of health literacy in the state health plan.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 104.002, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (6) to read as follows:

(6) "Health literacy" means the degree to which an individual has the capacity to find, understand, and use health information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions.

SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 104, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Section 104.0156 to read as follows:

Sec. 104.0156. HEALTH LITERACY PLAN. (a) The statewide health coordinating council shall develop a long-range plan for improving health literacy in this state. The council shall update the plan at least once every two years.

(b) In developing the long-range plan, the statewide health coordinating council shall study the economic impact of low health literacy on state health programs and health insurance coverage for state residents. The council shall:

(1) identify primary risk factors contributing to low health literacy;

(2) examine methods for health care practitioners,

1 health care facilities, and other persons to address the health
2 literacy of patients and other health care consumers;

3 (3) examine the effectiveness of using quality
4 measures in state health programs to improve health literacy;

5 (4) identify strategies for expanding the use of plain
6 language instructions for patients; and

7 (5) examine the impact of improved health literacy on
8 enhancing patient safety, reducing preventable events, and
9 increasing medication adherence to attain greater
10 cost-effectiveness and better patient outcomes in the provision of
11 health care.

12 (c) Not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year,
13 the statewide health coordinating council shall submit the
14 long-range plan developed or updated under this section to the
15 governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of
16 representatives, and each member of the legislature.

17 SECTION 3. Sections 104.022(e) and (f), Health and Safety
18 Code, are amended to read as follows:

19 (e) The state health plan shall be developed and used in
20 accordance with applicable state and federal law. The plan must
21 identify:

22 (1) major statewide health concerns, including the
23 prevalence of low health literacy among health care consumers;

24 (2) the availability and use of current health
25 resources of the state, including resources associated with
26 information technology and state-supported institutions of higher
27 education; and

(3) future health service, information technology,
and facility needs of the state.

(f) The state health plan must:

(1) propose strategies for:

(A) correcting [~~the correction of~~] major
deficiencies in the service delivery system;

(B) improving health literacy to attain greater
cost-effectiveness and better patient outcomes in the provision of
health care;

(C) [~~(2) propose strategies for~~] incorporating
information technology in the service delivery system; and

(D) [~~(3) propose strategies for~~] involving
state-supported institutions of higher education in providing
health services and for coordinating those efforts with health and
human services agencies in order to close gaps in services; and

(2) [~~(4)~~] provide direction for the state's
legislative and executive decision-making processes to implement
the strategies proposed by the plan.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.