



MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis Schrader, Secretary

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway
Chair, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: 2017 Senate Bill 503, Chapter 499 – Health Occupations Boards – Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities

Dear Chair Conway and Chair Pendergrass:

Enclosed please find the Maryland Department of Health's submission of a report in accordance with Senate Bill 503, Chapter 499 of the ACTS of 2017 (Health Occupations Boards – Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities). This document reflects the collective reporting of the Boards as requested by the General Assembly.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Kimberly Lang, Director of Health Occupations Boards and Commissions, at (410) 764-4682 or at kimberly.lang@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Kimberly Lang, Director of Health Occupations Boards and Commissions
Sarah Albert, MSAR No. 11307
Webster Ye, Deputy Chief of Staff

Maryland Department of Health
Health Occupations Boards – Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities
Report as Requested by Senate Bill 503, Chapter 499 (2017)

Acupuncture

The Maryland Board of Acupuncture emailed and posted on its website the Board's 2017 newsletter, which includes an article alerting all licensees that there are free CEU's available (up to 10 hours) on cultural competency.

Audiology

The Board of Audiologists (AUD), Hearing Aid Dispensers (HAD), and Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) discuss the topics of racial and ethnic health disparities, cultural competency, etc. when:

- presentations are made at local universities to SLP Master's-level students in their final semester;
- presentations are made to SLPs usually in employer-based settings for continuing education (CE) credit;
- presentations are made at annual meetings of professional associations (AUD, HAD and SLP); and
- when licensees call in with general inquiries about continuing education.

Chiropractic and Massage Therapy

The Board of Chiropractic Examiners and the Board of Massage Therapy Examiners have complied with SB503 by mandating the following:

1. The Boards require that all licensees renewing their license take a cultural competency continuing education course.
2. Both Chiropractic and Massage Therapy Board staff were mandated to participate in two webinars:
 - Introduction to Cultural Competency
 - Naming and Addressing Racism: A primerBoard members were encouraged to take these and other webinars.
3. The Boards will include an article on cultural competency in their next newsletters.

Dental Examiners

The Board of Dental Examiners allows a dentist or dental hygienist to complete up to eight hours of CE for pro bono work, and up to 4 hours of CE for “Board-approved courses on cultural competency.” COMAR 10.44.22.04G and H.

Dietetic Practice

The Board of Dietetic Practice supports the education of its licensees regarding cultural competency. In 2007, the Board published an article on cultural competency in its newsletter. The Board welcomes new and updated articles from the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and can post articles in the Board's newsletter and on the Board's website. In addition, new Board members attend the annual New Board Member Orientation which features cultural awareness speakers. The Board accepts cultural competency continuing education credits at license renewal. The Board looks forward to continuing to work with the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities in identifying other ways to educate licensees on cultural competency.

Environmental Health Specialists

Individuals licensed by the Board of Environmental Health Specialists protect the public health and consumer interests by enforcing compliance with federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Since the individuals licensed do not select their clients, the Board did not conduct any information campaigns or outreach efforts regarding racial and ethnic health disparities.

Morticians and Funeral Directors

The Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors pays much attention to the disparities that could affect the funeral profession and thus, its consumers. The Board members and the Executive Director are very conscious of providing equal education on the statutes and regulations to all professional associations. Additionally, the same standards for inspection are used for all funeral establishments owned by all cultural and religious groups, taking into consideration any special accommodations that may be necessary due to cultural and religious practice. The Board staff also provides public education to consumers of all groups, when asked, so that consumers understand final dispositional planning and options. Additionally, when consumers have complaints and have literacy issues, staff meets with them, individually to help them with any required paperwork.

Nursing

The Maryland Board of Nursing, through its flexible and broad core requirements for Board approved nursing education program curricula, encourages schools to include cultural competency, health care disparities, racial and cultural health equity, and health literacy in their curricula. To ensure that these issues were included in nursing education curriculums, the Board sent a survey to all 30 nursing education programs in this State - fourteen of the schools responded. Each of the responding schools said that cultural competency, health care disparities, and improving health literacy is included in their curriculum. Each school offered at least 2 or more hours of instruction per semester on the topics, integrated into their curricula, while most of them offered 4 or more hours of instruction. Additionally, the Board added an informational item to its website defining health care disparities and providing links to additional resources.

Nursing Home Administrators

The State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators ("BENHA") licenses a unique group of individuals in that, unlike the large majority of the health professionals licensed by the Health Occupations Boards and Commissions, Licensed Nursing Home Administrators ("LNHAs") are not medical providers or clinicians. The role of the LNHA is wholly administrative and managerial in nature. The LNHA is the equivalent to the "CEO" of the nursing home facility itself. Relative to providing medical care or treatment, LNHAs have no direct-care contact with the residents of their respective nursing home facilities. Rather, LNHAs have direct-report clinical professional employees (*e.g.*, geriatric physicians, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, etc.) who provide direct medical services to the nursing home residents.

The Board will award 3 continuing education units (CEUs) to licensees who take one of the approved courses on racial and ethnic health disparities. The Board has created a website link on this issue and will be loading additional information.

To ensure that BENHA is providing its licensees with critical information on the issue of racial and ethnic health disparities, the BENHA website will be updated to include information and voluntary courses on this issue.

Occupational Therapy

The Board of Occupational Therapy Practice includes the following in the Continuing Competency Requirement regulations, COMAR 10.46.04.02:

(9) Occupational Therapy Role-Related Activities.

(a) "Occupational therapy role-related activities" means activities which are relevant to and that augment a licensee's professional, job-related duties and responsibilities.

(b) "Occupational therapy role-related activities" may include inservices, course work, or workshops relative to:

- (i) Health care administration, management, or leadership;
- (ii) Other disciplines' clinical practices that relate to occupational therapy principles and procedures;
- (iii) Billing and regulatory issues;
- (iv) Health care computer programs that provide information to benefit clients or client education; or
- (v) Cultural competency.

Optometry

There is a link on the Board of Examiners in Optometry website of available courses in the areas of cultural competency, health disparities and military culture. In addition, there will be an article in the Board's annual newsletter regarding these courses. The Board has determined that there should be a mandatory requirement, 3 hours of instruction, in this topic area every renewal cycle similar to the CPR requirement. A Board committee has been formed with the charge to review the continuing education regulation. The committee's goal is to recommend CE requirement amendments to ensure better alignment with professional trends, modalities and

topics, including cultural competency/ health disparities. A relevant and current continuing education model is foundational, not only for continued competence in practice, but also for maintenance and portability of licensure.

Pharmacy

The Board of Pharmacy facilitates cultural competency online courses at their monthly staff meetings. The courses provide thought-provoking simulations that highlight cultural differences, sexual harassment, and bullying. Staff share their thoughts and ideas in these sessions.

The Board uses its quarterly newsletter to provide information on Maryland's racial and ethnic make-up and to provide information on Maryland's language hotline that provides translation services.

The Board has also been in close contact with the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD) in efforts to utilize videos currently in circulation for diversity education.

Physical Therapists

The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners continues to promote cultural competence as it carries forth its mandate of public protection while promoting safe access to physical therapy in the State of Maryland. As part of its routine evaluation of continuing education courses, the Board has approved several courses related to cultural competence in an attempt to support and educate clinicians on issues related to racial and ethnic health disparities. Courses currently approved by the Board include: Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practices for Pediatric Physical Therapists Working with the Hispanic Community; Cultural Diversity in the Patient Care Environment; Cultural Diversity and Implications in Pain Management; and Cultural Competency: Using Diversity to Improve Healthcare.

Physicians

In accordance with Senate Bill 503, the Maryland Board of Physicians (Board) has taken the following steps to enhance efforts to educate licensees on racial and ethnic health disparities:

August 2017:

- Initiated contact with Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD) seeking validated information to post on the Board website and make available to licensees.
- Conducted research to compile reliable educational information for Board's licensees in addition to materials offered by MDH.
- Identified current information available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website including Culture and Health Literacy Tools that were both general and State-specific.

September 2017:

- On September 12, 2017 the Board met with MDH and MHHD to discuss the requirements of the bill and to seek resources to make available on the Board's website for licensee education.

- Materials were posted on the Board website following receipt from MHHD.
- Materials and links from CDC were also posted on the Board website.

October 2017:

- On October 23, 2017 staff attended an external training on Developing Health Literacy tools conducted by the University of Maryland, College Park - School of Public Health. The training provided guidance on developing health literature for adult learners.

November 2017:

- An article was published in the Board's Newsletter to communicate resources available on the MHHD website and information about the Maryland's 14th Annual Statewide Health Equity Conference.

December 2017:

- Board staff attended the MDH Statewide Health Equity Conference "Bridging Health Equity Across Communities Conference" held on December 7, 2017, to gain greater knowledge and access to programs that utilize collaborative approaches to address health disparities.

Additionally, the Board will continue to seek out additional resources on an ongoing basis to update the website to educate licensees under its jurisdiction.

Podiatric Medical Examiners

At the of Board Podiatric Medical Examiners' April 2017 public meeting, racial and ethnic health disparities were discussed, as well as the issue of military culture requirements. The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities issued a memo dated September 15, 2017, which included the coursework information. The aforementioned correspondence concerning HB 275 (Recommended Courses in Military Culture), also included the pertinent links to coursework addressing requirements stated in SB 503.

Immediately subsequent to the September 2017 memo, the Board posted on the website the letter from the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, which included the accessible links for the available and pertinent course work. The Maryland Podiatric Medical Association and the licensees were informed. The licensees were encouraged to take the course work offered for free, and with the added benefit of awarding them 3 Continuing Medical Education Credits per each licensure renewal period.

Psychology Board

The Board of Examiners of Psychologists...

- Requires 3 continuing education hours to renew a license or registration.
- Requested, received, and posted articles in the newsletter from the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, *i.e.*,
 - The Case of Cultural Competency in Psychology
 - Barriers to Accessing Mental Health Services in Asian Americans
 - Using Laypeople to Treat Mental Health
 - Cultural Competency: Where Do We Go From Here?
 - What Do the CLAS Standards Mean for Individual Providers?

- Informs and encourages licensees to attend cultural competency trainings sponsored by the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and by the Latino Health Initiative.

The Psychology Board continues to look for innovative ways to increase the knowledge of licensees and enhance service delivery to diverse populations.

Professional Counselors and Therapists

The Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists has posted continuing education courses addressing issues of racial and ethnic health disparities and military culture on its website. Courses include: Introduction to Cultural Competency and Title VI; Health Literacy & Public Health: Strategies for Addressing Low Health Literacy; Putting Together the Pieces: Communicating with Limited English Proficiency Populations; The Health of LGBT People: Ending Disparities, Ending Invisibility; Exploring Cross Cultural Communication; Health Equity: A Public Health Essential.

Residential Child Care

Individuals certified by the Board for the Certification of Residential Child Care Program Professionals work with clients who are placed in facilities by other agencies. Since the individuals certified do not select their clients, the Board did not conduct any information campaigns or outreach efforts regarding racial and ethnic health disparities.

Social Work Examiners

The Board of Social Work Examiners believes this education and training must begin for members of the social work profession while the student is in school. There are nine competencies required for all social work programs with knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes comprising each competency. Competency Two is “Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.”

In addition to the pre-degree training, the Board’s Code of Ethics states under .06 Standards of Practice (2): “Acquire specialized education and training in order to provide the client with services that are culturally informed...”

Also, academic centers and private companies providing authorized continuing education for social workers have courses addressing this topic for both Category I and Category II training. For example, in the Fall 2017 publication of continuing professional education workshops by the University of Maryland School of Social Work there is a program titled, 701 SG Living and Dying By the Numbers: The Role of Health Disparities in Individual and Community Outcomes.