

House Bill 17

By: Representatives Schofield of the 63rd, Davis of the 87th, Scott of the 76th, Mitchell of the 88th, and Jackson of the 68th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 general provisions regarding health, so as to authorize the Department of Public Health to
3 implement projects to increase education, public awareness, and diagnosis of valvular heart
4 disease and to reduce the incidence of sudden cardiac death caused by valvular heart disease;
5 to provide for the priority of projects targeting affected populations or addressing health
6 disparities; to provide for coordination with other state agencies; to provide for the collection
7 and publishing of data regarding best practices for healthcare providers; to provide for related
8 matters; to provide for a short title; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting
9 laws; and for other purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

11 **SECTION 1.**

12 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Valvular Heart Health and Sudden Cardiac
13 Death Prevention Act."

SECTION 2.

Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions regarding health, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"31-1-26.

(a) The department shall implement projects to increase education on and public awareness of valvular heart disease, enhance the diagnosis and treatment of valvular heart disease, and reduce the incidence of sudden cardiac death caused by valvular heart disease. Such projects may be implemented by the department directly or through the award of grants or contracts to public or nonprofit private entities. The department may provide technical assistance with respect to the planning, development, and operation of such projects directly or through such awards.

(b) The projects provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section may include projects to initiate, increase, or improve:

(1) Education on and public awareness of the risk factors, symptoms, and public health consequences of valvular heart disease;

(2) Diagnostic capabilities of physicians and other healthcare providers regarding valvular heart disease and access to treatment for individuals with valvular heart disease; and

(3) Surveillance programs to analyze and report on out-of-hospital cardiac arrests related to valvular heart disease to improve patient outcomes.

(c) In awarding grants or contracts for projects pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section, the department shall give priority to projects that target populations most impacted by valvular heart disease or that address health disparities in the risk factors, treatment, and outcomes of valvular heart disease based on race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status.

(d) The department shall ensure that projects implemented pursuant to this Code section are coordinated, as appropriate, with other state agencies that carry out activities regarding valvular heart disease.

(e) The department shall:

(1) Collect and analyze the findings of research conducted with respect to valvular heart disease; and

(2) Publish on the department's public website best practices for physicians and other healthcare providers who provide care to individuals diagnosed with valvular heart disease. Such information shall also be annually distributed by the Georgia Composite Medical Board to all physicians licensed to practice medicine in this state."

SECTION 3.

This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

SECTION 4.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.