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SENATE BILL NO. 1347

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
 (Proposed by the Senate Committee on Education and Health
 on January 30, 2025)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Jordan)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 32.1 a chapter numbered 21, consisting of sections numbered 32.1-376 and 32.1-377, relating to Maternal Health Nurse Navigator Program; participation.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 32.1 a chapter numbered 21, consisting of sections numbered 32.1-376 and 32.1-377, as follows:

CHAPTER 21.**MATERNAL HEALTH NURSE NAVIGATOR PROGRAM.**

§ 32.1-376. Maternal Health Nurse Navigator Program; duties of maternal health nurse navigators and regional coordinators.

A. As used in this chapter, "Program" means the Maternal Health Nurse Navigator Program established in this section.

B. The Maternal Health Nurse Navigator Program is hereby established to serve pregnant and postpartum women and their families within clinical, community, virtual, and home settings by providing risk reduction interventions, health education, care coordination, and resources. The Program shall be open to anyone who is currently pregnant or who has given birth in the previous 12 months.

C. In developing and implementing the Program, the Department shall:

1. Appoint a maternal health nurse navigator who is licensed as an advanced practice registered nurse pursuant to § 54.1-2957 in each of the 35 health districts of the Commonwealth. Maternal health nurse navigators shall conduct:

a. Case finding and outreach, including at state and local correctional facilities;
 b. Assessments of health, social, environmental, and behavioral risk factors of patients in the Program;
 c. Case management services, utilizing a service delivery plan;
 d. Home visitation to support the delivery of and participation in prenatal and infant primary health care services; and

e. Childbirth and parenting education, including encouragement of breastfeeding;

2. Develop a referral procedure pursuant to § 32.1-377 that requires maternal health nurse navigators to:

a. Make initial contact with any referred patients within 14 days of such referral; and
 b. Contact the referred patient at least once every 90 days thereafter until the patient requests to leave the Program; and

3. Appoint a regional coordinator in each of the five health regions of the Commonwealth. Regional coordinators shall:

a. Collect data for each local health district within the regional coordinator's health region, including the number of families assisted by the Program, and the type and number of services provided to such families;

b. Compile and submit a report of the data collected to the Department no later than December 1, 2026, and by December 1 annually thereafter; and

c. Provide consultation, technical assistance, data, and resources to maternal health nurse navigators as needed.

§ 32.1-377. Voluntary participation in Program; referral procedure.

A. Physicians and nurses licensed under Chapter 29 (§ 54.1-2900 et seq.) or Chapter 30 (§ 54.1-3000 et seq.) of Title 54.1 shall advise their patients who are known to be pregnant or known to have given birth in the previous 12 months about the existence of the Program. If a patient chooses to participate in the Program, the physician or nurse shall send the following patient information to the Department of Health:

1. Name, address, phone number, and email address, if known; and

2. Where applicable, whether the physician or nurse considers the patient's pregnancy to be high risk.

B. Upon receipt of each referral, the Department shall dispatch a maternal health nurse navigator to contact the referred patient in accordance with subdivision C 2 of § 32.1-376.