

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2025 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 700

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 2 of Title 32.1 an article numbered 23, consisting of sections numbered 32.1-73.28 through 32.1-73.31, relating to Postpartum Depression Education Act; report.

[H 2446]

Approved May 2, 2025

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 2 of Title 32.1 an article numbered 23, consisting of sections numbered 32.1-73.28 through 32.1-73.31, as follows:

Article 23.

Postpartum Depression Education Act.

§ 32.1-73.28. Public awareness campaign; Department authorized to seek funding.

A. The Department, in collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, shall develop and implement a statewide public awareness campaign on perinatal and postpartum depression. Such campaign shall:

- 1. Increase awareness about the symptoms, risk factors, and treatment options for perinatal and postpartum depression;*
- 2. Provide culturally appropriate and accessible materials for diverse populations;*
- 3. Provide information to health care providers, birthing individuals, families, and community organizations;*
- 4. Utilize multiple platforms, including digital media, print materials, and community outreach programs, to maximize public engagement; and*
- 5. Highlight the importance of seeking early treatment for and reducing the stigma associated with perinatal and postpartum depression.*

B. The Department may seek and accept funding from any public or private entities to implement the provisions of this article.

§ 32.1-73.29. Development of educational materials and resources.

A. The Department shall create and distribute educational materials on perinatal and postpartum depression. Such materials shall include:

- 1. Fact sheets on symptoms, causes, and available treatment options;*
- 2. Contact information for local, state, and national resources, including crisis hotlines, counseling services, and support groups;*
- 3. Guidance for health care providers on screening, diagnosing, and managing perinatal and postpartum depression; and*
- 4. Information on the impact of untreated perinatal and postpartum depression on maternal and infant health outcomes.*

B. The Department shall distribute materials prepared pursuant to subsection A to:

- 1. Health care providers, including obstetricians, midwives, pediatricians, and primary care physicians;*
- 2. Hospitals, birthing centers, and clinics;*
- 3. Community organizations, including faith-based groups and nonprofit organizations; and*
- 4. Public health offices and other relevant government agencies.*

§ 32.1-73.30. Online resource hub.

The Department shall develop and maintain an online resource hub that provides:

- 1. Up-to-date information on perinatal and postpartum depression;*
- 2. A directory of mental health providers specializing in perinatal and postpartum care;*
- 3. Information on available support groups, counseling services, and treatment options;*
- 4. A platform for individuals and families to share experiences and connect with community resources.*

§ 32.1-73.31. Annual report.

A. The Department shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly that includes:

- 1. Metrics on public engagement with the programs implemented pursuant to this article;*
- 2. Feedback from health care providers, community organizations, and individuals served by programs implemented pursuant to this article;*
- 3. Progress in reducing stigma and increasing early detection and treatment of perinatal and postpartum depression; and*
- 4. Recommendations for improving or expanding programs implemented pursuant to this article.*

B. The Department shall publish the annual report prepared pursuant to subsection A on its website.

2. That the Department of Health shall submit the first report prepared pursuant to § 32.1-73.31 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, by November 1, 2026.