

AN ACT

1 Requiring certain hospitals to disseminate information relating
2 to pertussis education; and imposing a duty on the Department
3 of Health.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pertussis
8 Education Act.

9 Section 2. Purpose of act.

10 The purpose of this act is to educate mothers of newborn
11 infants regarding pertussis disease and the availability of
12 vaccine to protect newborn children against pertussis disease.

13 Section 3. Findings.

14 The General Assembly finds as follows:

15 (1) Commonly known as whooping cough, pertussis is a
16 highly contagious disease that can be prevented by
17 vaccination.

18 (2) During 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and

1 Prevention (CDC) reported an increase in pertussis in the
2 majority of states.

3 (3) Pennsylvania ranked 13th in the country in the
4 incidence of reported cases of pertussis.

5 (4) Pennsylvania's incidence of pertussis is higher than
6 the national incidence of cases of pertussis.

7 (5) Recommended vaccination for children is at 2, 4 and
8 6 months of age, followed by vaccination at 15 to 18 months
9 of age, with the final vaccination when the child enters
10 school.

11 (6) Pertussis can cause very serious illness which can
12 be potentially life threatening in infants too young to be
13 vaccinated.

14 (7) More than half of infants who contract pertussis
15 must be hospitalized.

16 (8) Of those infants who are hospitalized with pertussis
17 about 1 in 5 will get pneumonia and 1 in 100 will die.

18 (9) By getting immunized during pregnancy, an expectant
19 mother can transfer pertussis antibodies to her newborn child
20 and likely protect against pertussis early in life before the
21 infant is old enough to receive the pertussis vaccine.

22 (10) The CDC recommends that providers of prenatal care
23 implement a program of pertussis immunization for all
24 pregnant women, preferably at 28 through 36 weeks of
25 gestation.

26 (11) The CDC recommends that families and caregivers of
27 newborns be vaccinated at least two weeks prior to coming
28 into close contact with a newborn.

29 Section 4. Dissemination of pertussis information by hospitals.

30 (a) Options.--A hospital that provides health care services

1 to a pregnant woman, which services are directly related to her
2 pregnancy, shall before discharge after giving birth, provide
3 her with educational information on pertussis disease and the
4 availability of a vaccine to protect against pertussis.

5 Provision in a timely manner of publications prepared by the
6 Department of Health pursuant to section 5 shall constitute
7 compliance with this subsection.

8 (b) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
9 construed as requiring:

10 (1) A health care provider to provide or pay for
11 vaccination against pertussis.

12 (2) A pregnant woman to receive vaccination against
13 pertussis.

14 Section 5. Informational publications by Department of Health.

15 The Department of Health shall, on the department's publicly
16 accessible Internet website, make available to health care
17 providers printable publications that include information on the
18 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations
19 that pregnant women, family members and infant caregivers
20 receive vaccination against pertussis during the postpartum
21 period to protect their newborns from the transmission of
22 pertussis.

23 Section 6. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect in 60 days.