

SENATE No. 2325

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Twelve

An Act relative to educational information about premature infants' risks and healthcare needs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 67C of chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010
2 Official Edition is hereby amended by adding the following at the end thereof:—

3 The department shall prepare written educational publications containing information
4 about the possible complications, proper care and support associated with newborn infants who
5 are born premature at less than 37 weeks gestational age. The written information shall at a
6 minimum include the following:

7 (i) The unique health issues affecting infants born premature, such as: increased risk
8 of developmental problems; nutritional challenges; infection; chronic lung disease
9 (bronchopulmonary dysplasia); vision and hearing impairment; breathing problems; feeding;
10 maintaining body temperature; jaundice; hyperactivity; infant mortality as well as long-term
11 complications associated with growth and nutrition; respiratory problems; fine motor skills;
12 reading; writing; mathematics and speaking.

(ii) The proper care needs of premature infants, developmental screenings and monitoring and healthcare services available to premature infants through the Medicaid program and other public or private health programs.

(iii) Methods, vaccines and other preventative measures to protect premature infants from infectious diseases, including viral respiratory infections.

(iv) The emotional and financial burdens and other challenges that parents and family members of premature infants experience and information about community resources available to support them.

The publications shall be written in clear language to educate parents of premature infants across a variety of socioeconomic statuses. The department may consult with community organizations that focus on premature infants or pediatric healthcare. The department shall update the publications every two years. The department shall distribute such publications to children's health providers, maternal care providers, hospitals, public health departments and medical organizations and encourage those organizations to provide the publications to parents or guardians of premature infants.