

HOUSE No. 4228

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 25, 2014.

The committee on Ways and Means, to whom was referred the Bill relative to folic acid awareness and birth defects prevention (House, No. 2103, changed), reports recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment substituting therefor the accompanying bill (House, No. 4228).

For the committee,

BRIAN S. DEMPSEY.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen

An Act relative to public health.

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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 229 the following 2 sections:-

3 Section 230. The department of public health shall administer a folic acid awareness
4 initiative to increase public awareness of and education on the importance of folic acid to
5 patients, families and health care providers. As part of the initiative, the department shall
6 consider efforts to ensure that women receive the following daily recommended dosage levels of
7 folic acid to prevent neural tube defects: 400 micrograms (mcg) for women of childbearing age;
8 and 600 mcg for women during pregnancy. The department shall consult with public and not-for-
9 profit statewide maternal and child health care organizations to promote folic acid awareness.

10 Section 231. For the purposes of this section, the term “intensive care units” shall have
11 the same meaning as defined in 105 CMR 130.020 and shall include intensive care units within a
12 hospital operated by the commonwealth.

13 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, in all intensive care units the
14 patient assignment for the registered nurse shall be 1:1 or 1:2 depending on the stability of the
15 patient as assessed by the acuity tool and by the staff nurses in the unit, including the nurse
16 manager or the nurse manager’s designee when needed to resolve a disagreement.

17 The acuity tool shall be developed or chosen by each hospital in consultation with the
18 staff nurses and other appropriate medical staff and shall be certified by the department of public
19 health. The health policy commission shall promulgate regulations governing the implementation
20 and operation of this act including: the formulation of an acuity tool; the method of reporting to
21 the public on staffing compliance in hospital intensive care units; and the identification of 3 to 5
22 related patient safety quality indicators, which shall be measured and reported by hospitals to the
23 public.