HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 2254 FILED ON: 1/19/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1165

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Ruth B. Balser

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act making technical changes to the Betsy Lehman Center for patient safety and medical error reduction enabling statute.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Ruth B. Balser	*12th Middlesex*	*1/19/2023*
Samantha Montaño	*15th Suffolk*	*5/3/2023*
Rita A. Mendes	*11th Plymouth*	*6/20/2023*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 1165

By Representative Balser of Newton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1165) of Ruth B. Balser for legislation to make technical changes to the Betsy Lehman Center for patient safety and medical error reduction enabling statute. Health Care Financing.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act making technical changes to the Betsy Lehman Center for patient safety and medical error reduction enabling statute.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 12C of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 15, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 15. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

"Adverse event", harm to a patient resulting from a medical intervention and not to the underlying condition of the patient.

“Agency,” any agency of the executive branch of government in the commonwealth, including but not limited to any constitutional or other office, executive office, department, division, bureau, board, commission or committee thereof; or any authority created by the general court to serve a public purpose, having either statewide or local jurisdiction.

"Board", the patient safety and medical errors reduction board.

“Healthcare-associated infection,” an infection that a patient acquires during the course of receiving treatment for other conditions within a healthcare setting.

"Lehman center", the Betsy Lehman center for patient safety.

"Incident", an incident which, if left undetected or uncorrected, might have resulted in an adverse event.

"Medical error", the failure of medical management of a planned action to be completed as intended or the use of a wrong plan to achieve an outcome.

"Patient safety", freedom from accidental injury.

“Patient safety information,” data and information related to patient safety, including adverse events, incidents, medical errors, or healthcare-associated infections that are collected or maintained by agencies.

(b) There shall be established within the center the Betsy Lehman center for patient safety and medical error reduction. The purpose of the Lehman center shall be to serve as a clearinghouse for the development, evaluation and dissemination, including, but not limited to, the sponsorship of training and education programs, of best practices for patient safety and medical error reduction. The Lehman center shall: (1) coordinate the efforts of state agencies engaged in the regulation, contracting or delivery of health care and those individuals or institutions licensed by the commonwealth to provide health care to meet their responsibilities for patient safety and medical error reduction; (2) assist all such entities to work as part of a total system of patient safety; and (3) develop appropriate mechanisms for consumers to be included

in a statewide program for improving patient safety. The Lehman center shall coordinate state participation in any appropriate state or federal reports or data collection efforts relative to patient safety and medical error reduction. The Lehman center shall analyze available data, research and reports for information that would improve education and training programs that promote patient safety.

(c) Within the Lehman center, there shall be established a patient safety and medical errors reduction board. The board shall consist of secretary of health and human services, the executive director of the center, the director of consumer affairs and business regulations and the attorney general. The board shall appoint the director of the Lehman center by a unanimous vote and the director shall, under the general supervision of the board, have general oversight of the operation of the Lehman center. The director may appoint or retain and remove expert, clerical or other assistants as the work of the Lehman center may require. The coalition for the prevention of medical errors shall serve as the advisory committee to the board. The advisory committee shall, at the request of the director, provide advice and counsel as it considers appropriate including, but not limited to, serving as a resource for studies and projects undertaken or sponsored by the Lehman center. The advisory committee may also review and comment on regulations and standards proposed or promulgated by the Lehman center, but the review and comment shall be advisory in nature and shall not be considered binding on the Lehman center.

(d) The Lehman center shall develop and administer a patient safety and medical error reduction education and research program to assist health care professionals, health care facilities and agencies and the general public regarding issues related to the causes and consequences of medical error and practices and procedures to promote the highest standard for patient safety in

the commonwealth. The Lehman center shall annually report to the governor and the general court relative to the feasibility of developing standards for patient safety and medical error reduction programs for any state department, agency, commission or board to reduce medical errors, and the statutory responsibilities of the commonwealth, for the protection of patients and consumers of health care together with recommendations to improve coordination and effectiveness of the programs and activities.

(e) The Lehman center shall (1) identify and disseminate information about evidence-based best practices to reduce medical errors and enhance patient safety; (2) develop a process for determining which evidence-based best practices should be considered for adoption; (3) serve as a central clearinghouse for the collection and analysis of existing information on the causes of medical errors and strategies for prevention; and (4) increase awareness of error prevention strategies through public and professional education. The information collected by the Lehman center or reported to the Lehman center shall not be a public record as defined in section 7 of chapter 4, shall be confidential and shall not be subject to subpoena or discovery or introduced into evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding, except as otherwise specifically provided by law.

(f) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Lehman Center and each agency that collects or maintains patient safety information may transmit such information, including personal data under section 1 of chapter 66A, to each other through an agreement, that can be an interagency service agreement, that provides for any safeguards necessary to protect the privacy and security of the information; provided, that the provision of such information is consistent with federal law.

(g) The Lehman center may adopt rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purpose and provisions of this section. The Lehman center may contract with any federal, state or municipal agency or other public institution or with any private individual, partnership, firm, corporation, association or other entity to manage its affairs or carry out the purpose and provisions of this section.

(h) The Lehman center shall report annually to the general court regarding the progress made in improving patient safety and medical error reduction. The Lehman center shall seek federal and foundation support to supplement state resources to carry out the Lehman center's patient safety and medical error reduction goals. The Lehman center may establish a trust fund that is structured to receive, maintain, and spend federal and foundation grants in furtherance of its responsibilities under this section and, to such extent, the director of the Lehman center shall have the powers provided in section 6 of chapter 6A.