SENATE DOCKET, NO. 2084 FILED ON: 1/17/2025

SENATE . . . . . No. 805

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patrick M. O'Connor

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 relative to PANDAS/PANS screening in medical/clinical settings.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Patrick M. O'Connor	*First Plymouth and Norfolk*	
Joan B. Lovely	*Second Essex*	*11/3/2025*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 805

By Mr. O'Connor, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 805) of Patrick M. O'Connor relative to PANDAS/PANS screening in medical/clinical settings. Financial Services.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. *3920* OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act relative to PANDAS/PANS screening in medical/clinical settings.

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. Section 17R of chapter 32A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “for”, in line 3, the following words:- screening and.

SECTION 2. Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 242 the following section:-

Section 242A. (a) For all children, the department shall establish a program for screening of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections, hereinafter referred to as PANDAS and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome, hereinafter referred to as PANS, which shall adhere to the recommendations developed by a medical professional consortium convened by the department for the purposes of researching,

identifying, and publishing best practice standards for diagnosis and treatment of such disorders or syndrome that are accessible for medical professionals and are based on evidence of positive patient outcomes.

(b) The department shall develop a PANS working criteria to describe a clinically distinct presentation defined as follows: (i) abrupt, dramatic onset of obsessive-compulsive disorder or severely restricted food intake; (ii) concurrent presence of additional neuropsychiatric symptoms, with similarly severe and acute onset, from at least 2 of the following categories: (1) anxiety; (2) emotional lability or depression; (3) irritability, aggression or severely oppositional behaviors; (4) behavioral or developmental regression; (5) deterioration in school performance related to attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)-like symptoms, memory deficits, cognitive changes; (6) sensory or motor abnormalities; (7) somatic signs and symptoms, including sleep disturbances, enuresis or urinary frequency; and (iii) symptoms are not better explained by a known neurologic or medical disorder, such as Sydenham chorea.

SECTION 3. Chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 12GG the following section:-

Section 12HH. (a) Each physician duly registered pursuant to section 2, 2A, 9, 9A, or 9B, each licensed child psychiatrist or psychologist, each licensed certified social worker or each licensed mental health counselor shall screen patients for pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections, hereinafter referred to as PANDAS and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome, hereinafter referred to as PANS, at the intervals and using the methods specified in the regulations adopted pursuant to section 242A of chapter 111.

(b) Each licensed, registered or approved health care facility serving children, including but not limited to hospitals and clinics licensed under section 51 of chapter 111 and health maintenance organizations approved under the provisions of chapter 176G, shall take appropriate steps to ensure that their patients receive such PANDAS/PANS screening.

SECTION 4. Section 47NN of chapter 175 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “for”, in line 3, the following words:- screening and.

SECTION 5. Section 8OO of chapter 176A of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “for”, in line 3, the following words:- screening and.

SECTION 6. Section 4OO of chapter 176B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “for”, in line 3, the following words:- screening and.

SECTION 7. Section 4GG of chapter 176G of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “for”, in line 2, the following words:- screening and.

SECTION 8. The department of public health shall promulgate a working criteria and regulations to implement the provisions of section 242A of chapter 111 of the General Laws within 180 days of the effective date of this act.

SECTION 9. Section 3 shall take effect 270 days after the effective date of this act.