

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
2025-2026 (194th) BILL SUMMARY**

Bill No: H1249

Title: AN ACT RELATIVE TO PANDAS/PANS SCREENING IN MEDICAL/CLINICAL SETTINGS

Sponsor: Rep. Kate Lipper-Garabedian (*Melrose*)

Hearing Date: October 27, 2025

Bill Reporting Deadline: December 3, 2025

Prior History:

2023-24 (H3920): Reported favorably; Referred to Health Care Financing; Reported favorably; HWM

Similar Matters: S805 (O'Connor - Identical)

CURRENT LAW:

M.G.L. c. 111 Public Health

M.G.L. c. 112 Registration of Certain Professions and Occupations

M.G.L. c. 175 Insurance

M.G.L. c. 176A Non-Profit Hospital Service Corporations (Blue Cross of Massachusetts)

M.G.L. c. 176B Medical Service Corporations (Blue Shield of Massachusetts)

M.G.L. c. 176G Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs)

Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2020, An Act promoting a resilient health care system that puts patients first § 2, 26, 47, 48, 50, 52

Establishes within the Department of Public Health (DPH) an advisory council on pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococcal infections (PANDAS) and pediatric acute neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS), to advise the public health commissioner on related research, diagnosis, treatment and education.

Directs the advisory council to issue an annual report to the legislature with recommendations concerning: (i) practice guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of the disorder and syndrome; (ii) development of screening protocols; (iii) mechanisms to increase clinical awareness and education regarding the disorder and syndrome among physicians, including pediatricians, school-based health centers and providers of mental health services; (iv) outreach to educators

and parents to increase awareness of the disorder and syndrome; and (v) development of a network of volunteer experts on the diagnosis and treatment of the disorder and syndrome.

Mandates the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and commercial health insurers provide coverage for treatment of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (PANDAS) and pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS), including, but not limited to, the use of intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) therapy.

SUMMARY:

This bill directs the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish a program to screen for pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (PANDAS) and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) and to develop a PANS working criteria to describe a clinically distinct presentation.

Screening recommendations will 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.

The bill directs licensed physicians, child psychiatrists, child psychologists, certified social workers, and mental health counselors to screen patients for PANDAS/PANS as specified by DPH regulation within 270 days of the bill's enactment.

The bill directs health care facilities serving children, including but not limited to, hospitals and clinics and health maintenance organizations to take appropriate steps to ensure that their patients receive PANDAS/PANS screening within 270 days of the bill's enactment.

The bill mandates that the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and commercial health insurers provide coverage for PANDAS/PANS screening.