

(H. B. 2270)

(No. 236)

(Approved November 3, 2006)

AN ACT

To add a clause (3) to subsection C of Section 6 of Subchapter VI of Act No. 72 of September 7, 1993, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration Act,” to guarantee the free selection of health services provided by licensed nutrition and dietetics professionals to the beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

Nutrition is a factor of vital importance in development and maintenance of health. Therefore, the role of licensed nutrition and dietetics professionals is essential in society, because these professionals are experts in the area of foods and nutrition. Our body of laws defines a nutritionist dietitian as a professional who is qualified to interpret and apply scientific knowledge about nutrition to the planning, organization, development and direction of programs to promote health and prevent debilitating illnesses, as well as to the research, study and solution of problem with respect to nutrition in individuals or groups.

As in man other professions, the nutritionist-patient relationship must be based upon trust and free selection. Therefore, this Legislature deems it necessary to raise to the rank of Law to assurance to the patient that with the due referral of the primary health care center, he/she may freely select the nutritionist he/she prefers. This legislation shall certainly promote and enable the beneficiaries of the Health Reform to address their nutritional condition through better access to a qualified and trusted health professional.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- A clause (3) is hereby added to subsection C of Section 6 of Subchapter VI of Act No. 72 of September 7, 1993, as amended, to read as follows:

“SUBCHAPTER VI.- HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN

Section 1.-

Section 6.- Coverage and Minimum Benefits

The health plans shall have a broad coverage with a minimum of exclusions. There shall be no exclusions for pre-existing conditions, nor waiting periods at the time coverage is granted to the beneficiary.

A. ...

C. In its out-patient coverage, the plans shall include the following without being a limitation:

(1) Preventive health services

...

(3) Access to health services provided by licensed nutrition and dietetics professionals.

With a referral from a primary physician, all beneficiaries may freely select a licensed nutritionist or dietetics professional. Beneficiaries shall freely select their licensed nutrition and dietetics professional from providers in the network contracted by the insurer of the area.”

Section 2.- The Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration shall adopt all the standards, rules and regulations needed to comply with the purposes of this Act.

Section 3.- This Act shall take effect sixty (60) days after its approval, except for Section 2, which shall take effect immediately after the approval of this Act.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 236 (H.B. 2270) of the 4th Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to add a clause (3) to subsection C of Section 6 of Subchapter VI of Act No. 72 of September 7, 1993, as amended, known as the “Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration Act,” to guarantee the free selection of health services provided by licensed nutrition and dietetics professionals to the beneficiaries,

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 13th of February of 2007.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director