

ASSEMBLY, No. 3079

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

“Parkinson’s Disease Public Awareness and Education Act.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning Parkinson’s disease and supplementing Title 26
2 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Parkinson's
8 Disease Public Awareness and Education Act.”

9
10 2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

11 a. Parkinson’s disease is a debilitating, painful, and incurable
12 neurological disorder of unknown origin that disrupts and can end
13 the lives of those who suffer from it;

14 b. Parkinson’s disease causes diverse symptoms, including
15 rigidity, slowness of movement, poor balance, and tremors, which
16 lead to an impaired ability to walk, speak, swallow, and even
17 breathe, so that the end result can be a clear mind trapped inside a
18 body that has lost its ability to function;

19 c. The visible symptoms of Parkinson’s disease are often
20 mistaken to be a normal part of the aging process;

21 d. In addition, many people with the disease encounter
22 precarious legal and personal situations in which they are
23 erroneously thought to be under the influence of illegal or
24 prescription drugs or alcohol due to their movement and gait
25 patterns;

26 e. Parkinson’s disease takes an enormous emotional,
27 psychological, and physical toll on caregivers and families,
28 potentially overwhelming their lives;

29 f. It has been estimated that 1.5 million Americans have been
30 diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, 50,000 more are diagnosed
31 nationally each year, and another 1.5 million persons have the
32 disease but have never seen a neurologist;

33 g. Parkinson’s disease costs Americans \$25 billion per year,
34 including medical treatments, disability payments, and lost
35 productivity;

36 h. Medications can only control some of the symptoms of the
37 disease and only for uncertain periods of time;

38 i. New Jersey, with the largest concentration of pharmaceutical
39 companies of any state in the nation and its top academic research
40 facilities, is a center for Parkinson's disease research and treatment;

41 j. The “Morris K. Udall Parkinson’s Disease Research Act of
42 1997,” Pub.L.105-78, provides federal funding through the National
43 Institutes of Health for Parkinson’s disease, and April 11 has been
44 proclaimed to be World Parkinson’s Day in order to recognize the
45 need for more research and help in dealing with the devastating
46 effects of this disease;

47 k. This State, through the enactment of Joint Resolution No. 17
48 on January 7, 2000, has designated April in each year as

1 “Parkinson’s Disease Awareness Month” in New Jersey, and directs
2 the Governor to annually issue a proclamation calling upon the
3 public officials and citizens of the State to observe this month with
4 appropriate activities and programs;

5 l. Increased public awareness and education are needed among
6 health care, social services, judicial, law enforcement, and
7 emergency medical services personnel in order to better respond to
8 the needs of Parkinson’s disease patients and their caregivers and
9 families; and

10 m. It is imperative for New Jersey to commit itself to actively
11 support such public awareness and education efforts throughout the
12 State in order to better meet the needs of its citizens who are
13 suffering from Parkinson’s disease.

14
15 3. As used in this act:

16 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Health.

17 “Department” means the Department of Health.

18 “Program” means the Parkinson’s disease public awareness and
19 education program established pursuant to this act.

20
21 4. The Commissioner of Health, subject to available
22 appropriations, shall establish a Parkinson’s disease public
23 awareness and education program.

24 a. The purpose of the program shall be to promote public
25 awareness of Parkinson’s disease and the value of early detection
26 and possible treatments, including the benefits and risks of those
27 treatments. The Department of Health may accept, for that purpose,
28 any special grant of monies, services, or property from the federal
29 government or any of its agencies, or from any foundation,
30 organization, or medical school.

31 b. The program shall include the following:

32 (1) Development of a public education and outreach campaign
33 to promote Parkinson’s disease awareness and education, including,
34 but not limited to, the following subjects:

35 (a) the cause and nature of the disease;

36 (b) diagnostic procedures and appropriate indications for their
37 use;

38 (c) lifestyle issues relating to how a person copes with
39 Parkinson’s disease, including, but not limited to, nutrition, diet,
40 and physical exercise;

41 (d) environmental safety and injury prevention; and

42 (e) availability of Parkinson’s disease diagnostic and treatment
43 services in the community;

44 (2) Development of educational materials to be made available
45 to consumers through local boards of health, physicians, hospitals,
46 and clinics;

47 (3) Development of professional education programs for health
48 care providers to assist them in understanding research findings and

1 the subjects set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection;

2 (4) Development of educational programs for other personnel,
3 including judicial staff, police officers, fire fighters, and social
4 services and emergency medical service providers, to assist them in
5 recognizing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease and understanding
6 how to respond to the needs of persons with the disease in the
7 course of performing their duties, including dissemination of the
8 informational booklet prepared pursuant to section 5 of this act; and

9 (5) Development and maintenance of a list of current providers
10 of specialized services for the diagnosis and treatment of
11 Parkinson's disease. Dissemination of the list shall be accompanied
12 by a description of diagnostic procedures, appropriate indications
13 for their use, and a cautionary statement about the current status of
14 Parkinson's disease research and treatment. The statement shall
15 also indicate that the department does not endorse specific
16 Parkinson's disease programs or centers in this State.

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18 5. The department, in consultation with the New Jersey
19 Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association and the
20 Movement Disorders Center at the Robert Wood Johnson
21 University Medical Group, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical
22 School, shall prepare, and make available on the department's
23 Internet website, in English and Spanish, and in a manner that is
24 easily understandable by a patient or other non-health care
25 professional, information about the symptoms and treatment of
26 Parkinson's disease and any other information that the
27 commissioner deems to be necessary. This information may be
28 revised by the department whenever new information about
29 Parkinson's disease becomes available.

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31 6. The Commissioner of Health, pursuant to the
32 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
33 seq.), may adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of
34 this act.

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36 7. This act shall take effect on the 180th day following
37 enactment, except that the Commissioner of Health may take such
38 anticipatory administrative action in advance as shall be necessary
39 for the implementation of the act.

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STATEMENT

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44 This bill, designated as the "Parkinson's Disease Public
45 Awareness and Education Act," requires the Commissioner of
46 Health to establish a Parkinson's disease public awareness and
47 education program, subject to available appropriations.

1 The program is to include the development of a public education
2 and outreach campaign to promote Parkinson's disease awareness
3 and education, including, but not limited to: (1) the cause and
4 nature of the disease; (2) diagnostic procedures and appropriate
5 indications for their use; (3) lifestyle issues relating to how a person
6 copes with Parkinson's disease; (4) environmental safety and injury
7 prevention; and (5) availability of Parkinson's disease diagnostic
8 and treatment services in the community.

9 The program is also to include the development of: educational
10 materials to be made available to consumers through local boards of
11 health, physicians, hospitals, and clinics; professional education
12 programs for health care providers to assist them in understanding
13 research findings and the subjects set forth in the bill; and
14 educational programs for other personnel, including judicial staff,
15 police officers, fire fighters, and social services and emergency
16 medical service providers, to assist them in recognizing the
17 symptoms of Parkinson's disease and understanding how to respond
18 to the needs of persons with the disease in the course of performing
19 their duties, including dissemination of the information prepared
20 pursuant to the bill.

21 The program is also to include the development and maintenance
22 of a list of current providers of specialized services for the
23 diagnosis and treatment of Parkinson's disease. Dissemination of
24 the list is to be accompanied by a description of diagnostic
25 procedures, appropriate indications for their use, and a cautionary
26 statement about the current status of Parkinson's disease research
27 and treatment. The statement must indicate that DOH does not
28 endorse specific Parkinson's disease programs or centers in this
29 State.

30 The bill directs DOH, in consultation with the New Jersey
31 Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association and the
32 Movement Disorders Center at the Robert Wood Johnson
33 University Medical Group, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical
34 School, to prepare, and make available on the department's Internet
35 website, in English and Spanish, and in a manner that is easily
36 understandable to patients and other laypeople, information about
37 the symptoms and treatment of Parkinson's disease, and other
38 information the commissioner deems to be necessary.