STATE OF NEW YORK

9481

IN ASSEMBLY

March 14, 2024

Introduced by M. of A. SOLAGES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to the creation of the health professional nutrition education office

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Article 2 of the public health law is amended by adding a new title 4-A to read as follows:

TITLE IV-A

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL NUTRITION EDUCATION OFFICE

Section 255. Definitions.
255-a. Office of health professional nutrition education created.
255-b. Health professional nutrition education council.
255-c. Preparation and distribution of reports.

§ 255. Definitions. For purposes of this title:

1. "Health professional" shall mean a physician or other individual providing medical and/or health care services under articles one hundred thirty-one, one hundred thirty-one-B and one hundred thirty-three of the education law.

2. "Health professional training program" shall mean medical schools, graduate medical education programs, dental schools, physician assistant programs, and other institutions that educate and train health professionals.

3. "Office" shall mean the office of health professional nutrition education, as created pursuant to section two hundred fifty-five-a of this title.

4. "Health professional nutrition education council" or "council" shall mean the advisory body to the commissioner, created pursuant to the provisions of section two hundred fifty-five-b of this title.

§ 255-a. Office of health professional nutrition education created. There is hereby created an office of health professional nutrition education within the department. Such office shall:

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1. Assist health professional training programs in developing curricula and programs to improve the education of health professionals in the topics of diet and nutrition. This may be accomplished by establishing core competencies in nutrition for relevant health professional training programs, acting as a clearinghouse for information about existing initiatives and available curricular offerings, and providing recognition for health professional training programs with excellent curricular offerings in nutrition.

2. Apply for grants and accept gifts from private and public sources for research to improve and enhance the education of health professionals regarding diet and nutrition. The office shall also promote nutrition education research in universities and colleges, including research regarding the impact of physician nutrition education on population health.

3. Together with the council, serve as liaison to the department on matters regarding the education of health professionals in nutrition. This function shall include the provision of staff support to the council and the preparation and distribution of triennial reports as provided for in section two hundred fifty-five-c of this title.

§ 255-b. Health professional nutrition education council. 1. There shall be established within the office a health professional nutrition education council to be composed of the commissioner and fourteen members to be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. The governor shall designate one of the members of the public health and health planning council as its chair. The members of the council shall include deans or other representatives of health professional training programs; representatives of health professionals; and individuals with expertise in public health, health planning, health workforce education, nutrition dietetics, and lifestyle medicine.

2. a. The council shall, at the request of the commissioner, consider any matter relating to the nutrition education and training of health professionals, and may advise the commissioner thereon; and it may, from time to time, submit to the commissioner any recommendations relating to the provision of health professional nutrition education.

b. The council shall also assist the office with its responsibilities as delineated in section two hundred fifty-five-a of this title; contribute to the triennial report required pursuant to section two hundred fifty-five-c of this title; and act as liaison and advocate on health professional nutrition education matters.

3. a. The terms of office of members of the council shall be three years. The members of the council shall continue in office until the expiration of their terms and until their successors are appointed and have qualified. Such appointments shall be made by the governor, with the advice and consent of the senate, within one year following the expiration of such terms.

b. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the governor for the unexpired terms within one year of the date upon which such vacancies occur.

4. The council shall meet as frequently as its business may require, but not less than two times a year. Meetings may be called by the chairperson at the request of the commissioner.

5. The members of the council shall serve without compensation other than reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties hereunder.

6. Staff support for the council shall be provided for by the office as provided for in section two hundred fifty-five-a of this title.

7. The entirety of each meeting of the council shall be live webcast to the public on the department's website and shall be archived on the department's website, for a period of no less than two years, within twenty-four hours of the adjournment of the last meeting. The department shall provide notice to the public, via the department's website, of the availability of the live webcast of each such meeting.

§ 255-c. Preparation and distribution of reports. The department shall submit a triennial report to the governor and the legislature describing the activities of the office, the status of health professional nutrition education in New York, and the policy options available to increase health professional nutrition education. The first such report shall be transmitted on or before September first, two thousand twenty-seven. Such reports shall contain the following information:

1. Activities of the office, expenditures incurred in carrying out such activities, and anticipated activities to be undertaken in the future.

2. Progress in carrying out the functions and duties listed in section two hundred fifty-five-a of this title.

3. An analysis of the status of health professional nutrition education in New York, the policy options available to encourage health professional training programs to provide adequate nutrition education, and the policy options available to encourage health professionals themselves to obtain adequate nutrition education. Such analysis shall be conducted in cooperation with the council.

4. Any recommended improvements to programs and/or regulations that would improve the nutrition education of health professionals.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.