§ 207. Health care and wellness education and outreach program. 1. There is hereby created within the department the health care and wellness education and outreach program. The department may conduct education and outreach programs for consumers, patients, educators, including but not limited to elementary and secondary school educators, and health care providers relating to any health care matters the commissioner deems appropriate and:

(a) Various health conditions, diseases and health care procedures and treatment options, including but not limited to those for breast, cervical, colorectal, prostate, testicular, skin, and ovarian cancer, shaken baby syndrome, reflex sympathetic dystrophy syndrome and post-polio sequelae.

(b) Recommended preventative and wellness practices and services, including evidence based age and gender appropriate testing and screening exams and immunization schedules.

(c) Lymphedema and lymphatic disease, an abnormal swelling of the extremities including the causes, symptoms of primary lymphedema, secondary lymphedema and lymphatic disease, prevention, early diagnosis, options for treatment and therapy, long-term chronic care issues, the value of early detection, possible options for treatment including their benefits and risks, and other relevant information and the recommendation that hospitals treating breast cancer patients implement a lymphedema alert program by placing a bright pink wristband on the patient's affected arm. Links to national lymphedema and lymphatic disease organizations shall be provided as part of the informational summary and electronically through the department's websites.

(d) The need for and importance of organ and tissue donation, including living donation, including information about being registered as an organ and tissue donor and executing documents of gift under article forty-three of this chapter; and information to increase patient understanding about the medical option of transplant and its desirability. The department shall consult with the transplant council on the production of any such information and ensure that such information is culturally and linguistically appropriate for all recipients.

(e) The commissioner shall establish a statewide advance care planning campaign to:

(i) promote public awareness of hospice and palliative care services; and palliative care options for patients with a terminal illness or condition;

(ii) inform the public of the importance of advance care planning and the individual's right to direct and participate in health care decisions affecting the individual;

(iii) educate individuals on the tools available to ensure their health care decisions are honored; and

(iv) the need and importance for consumers and patients to have an advance directive, particularly a health care proxy, and the need and importance for health care providers to play a leadership role in discussing end-of-life care preferences and values with patients and to provide patients with health care proxy forms.

(f) Uterine fibroids, an abnormal growth that occurs in the uterus, including the causes and symptoms of uterine fibroids, the value of early detection, possible options for treatment including their benefits and risks, information on the elevated risk for minority women and other relevant information.

(g) Improving birth outcomes, including the importance of preconceptional care, early prenatal care, considerations of health risks during pregnancy, considerations of benefits and risks of labor and delivery options including, but not limited to, vaginal and cesarean section delivery, elective or repeat cesarean sections, and appropriate use of drugs during delivery. There shall also be education and outreach concerning spina bifida, a permanently disabling birth defect occurring at the end of the first month of pregnancy which involves the incomplete development of the spinal cord or its coverings, and the importance of encouraging all women in their child-bearing years to increase their folic acid intake in order to reduce the incidence of spina bifida.

* (h)(i) Down syndrome including up-to-date and evidence-based information about Down syndrome, not limited to the following:

(1) expected physical, developmental, educational, and psychosocial outcomes;

(2) life expectancy;

(3) the clinical course description;

(4) expected intellectual and functional development;

(5) available intervention or treatment options;

(6) information hotlines specific to Down syndrome;
(7) relevant resource centers or clearinghouses;
(8) national and local Down syndrome organizations; and
(9) any other information the department deems necessary.

Such information shall be provided electronically through the department's website.

(ii) The commissioner shall (1) examine and utilize existing practices to ensure that the information provided under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph is culturally and linguistically appropriate for all recipients; and (2) meet with representatives from the Down syndrome community as necessary to ensure such information is current.

* NB There are 3 par (h)'s

* (h) Drug-induced movement disorders, including the importance of screening for and identifying symptoms of drug-induced movement disorders, treatment for drug-induced movement disorders, and information on methods by which the stigma experienced by people living with drug-induced movement disorders related to the treatment of mental health conditions may be reduced or eliminated. Any such educational materials disseminated to healthcare providers shall be developed in consultation with the commissioner of the office of mental health, disseminated by the department in coordination with relevant healthcare provider groups, and shall include best practices for the treatment and screening of movement disorders informed by the American Psychiatric Association and other professional society practice guidelines.

* NB There are 3 par (h)'s

* (h) Births of infants with congenital heart defects, including treatment recommendations, and any other information the commissioner deems appropriate.

* NB There are 3 par (h)'s

(i) About the short term and long term adverse health risks to adults and children who become overweight, obese or underweight. The information shall include, but need not be limited to providing citations to the department's website, as well as any other websites providing information on the subject.

* (j) Maternal depression, including information about education, screening, referral services, and possible options for treatment.

* NB There are 2 par (j)'s

* (j) The eating disorders awareness and prevention program shall be designed to promote the awareness of eating disorders and available services, as well as to prevent and reduce the incidence and prevalence of eating disorders, especially among children and adolescents.

* NB There are 2 par (j)'s

* (k) Donating umbilical cord blood to a public cord blood bank.

* NB There are 3 par (k)'s

* (k) The availability of individual, family and group counseling programs, education programs, and advocacy services provided at no cost by governmental agencies and not-for-profit organizations for victims of any sexual offense which constitutes a crime and for victims of child pornography promotion or possession.

* NB There are 3 par (k)'s

* (k) The physical, sexual and psychological consequences of undergoing female genital mutilation, including the practice of "vacation cutting" whereby girls are sent out of state or the country to undergo female genital mutilation, typically during school vacations.

* NB There are 3 par (k)'s

(l) The dangers of women's cancers, including ways to prevent and severity of such diseases. For purposes of this paragraph, women's cancers shall mean and include: cervical, endometrial, gestational trophoblastic tumor, ovarian, uterine sarcoma, vaginal, and vulvar.

* (m) A Lyme disease and tick-borne infection awareness and prevention program designed to promote the awareness and prevention methods against Lyme disease and tick-borne infections. Such information shall include but not be limited to guidelines and methods of prevention, including the safe use of recommended insect repellents, the best practices for tick removal, recommendations for the reduction of exposure to ticks and appropriate course of action once a tick is removed from the body.

* NB There are 3 par (m)'s

* (m) The department shall conduct such a program relating to breast density, which shall include, but not be limited to, educational information regarding the meaning and potential health consequences of having dense breast tissue, the impact of dense breast tissue on mammographic screening for breast cancer and supplemental breast cancer screening techniques, and provide access to other educational websites

regarding dense breast tissue and literature regarding risk factors.

* NB There are 3 par (m)'s

* (m) Lupus, a debilitating autoimmune disease that can cause inflammation and tissue damage to virtually any organ system in the body, including the skin, joints, other connective tissue, blood and blood vessels, heart, lung, kidney and brain, and which affects women, particularly women of color, in a disproportionate manner; provided that the program shall include an advisory council under this section that shall include representatives of people with lupus and their families and health care providers who specialize in treating lupus, among others.

* NB There are 3 par (m)'s

(n) Pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome, a clinical diagnosis given to children who have a sudden and dramatic onset of neuropsychiatric symptoms including obsessive compulsive disorder and/or eating disorder, and which may cause affected children to become moody, irritable and anxious, and to have difficulty with schoolwork. Provided that such program shall include an advisory council under this section that shall include representatives of people with pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome and their families and health care providers who specialize in treating such syndrome, among others.

(o) For women who may become pregnant, expectant parents and parents of infants, information regarding:

(i) the incidence of cytomegalovirus;

(ii) the transmission and risks of cytomegalovirus to pregnant women and women who may become pregnant;

(iii) birth defects caused by congenital cytomegalovirus;

(iv) methods of diagnosing congenital cytomegalovirus;

(v) the available preventive measures to avoid the infection of women who are pregnant or may become pregnant; and

(vi) available methods of treating cytomegalovirus and resources available for families of children born with cytomegalovirus.

* (p) Reproductive health conditions that affect female fertility, including but not limited to polycystic ovary syndrome, endometriosis, and pelvic inflammatory disease.

* NB There are 3 par (p)'s

* (p) Postnatal donation of tissue and fluids.

* NB There are 3 par (p)'s

* (p) Preeclampsia, including information about detection, risk factors and management, and possible options for treatment.

* NB There are 3 par (p)'s

(q) Myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome ("ME/CFS"), a multi-system disease associated with neurological, immunological and energy metabolism impairment characterized by long-standing and debilitating fatigue.

* (r) For those who are experiencing pregnancy loss or infant loss, which shall for the purposes of this paragraph include but not be limited to, miscarriage, stillbirth, or termination for medical reasons, information regarding:

(i) the potential mental and physical impact from such loss; and

(ii) resources for support and follow-up care.

* NB There are 4 par (r)'s

* (r) The physical, sexual, and psychological impact of medical procedures performed on intersex individuals, including those who have not themselves consented to the procedure; provided that the department shall consult with appropriate stakeholders, including, but not limited to intersex persons, intersex-led organizations, and their chosen advocates, while developing this outreach program.

* NB There are 4 par (r)'s

* (r) Sickle cell disease including but not limited to screening, prevention, and treatment information. The department, through the health equity council pursuant to section two hundred forty-three of this article, or a successor council, shall consult with patients with sickle cell disease and their families and health care providers specializing in treating sickle cell disease, among others, in the production of any such information.

* NB There are 4 par (r)'s

* (r) Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias; including identification of dementia in health care facilities including but not limited to hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and assisted living facilities; community support services, including caregiver support groups and services, respite, and care management; and resources and information concerning Alzheimer's disease and any other dementia related matters that the commissioner deems appropriate.

* NB There are 4 par (r)'s

* (s) Promoting public awareness of the dangers of fatal and non-fatal drowning, including but not limited to the unique risk factors and exposures associated with infant and early drowning, childhood and teenage drowning and adult drowning, the disparate risk of drowning in disadvantaged communities identified pursuant to section 75-0111 of the environmental conservation law and with individuals with a mental disability as defined by subdivision three of section 1.03 of the mental hygiene law, and methods to reduce the risks of drowning, including but not limited to water safety instruction, swim lessons, and awareness of water based risks.

* NB There are 2 par (s)'s

* NB Effective June 1, 2025

* (s) The importance of good oral health, including but not limited to, the impact of oral disease, causes of oral disease and its prevention, oral health across the lifespan, the total body connection, the value of early detection and the availability of oral health services in the community.

* NB There are 2 par (s)'s

2. Programs under this section, dealing with one or more subjects, may include but not be limited to any of the following elements:

(a) educational and informational materials in print, audio, visual, electronic or other media;

(b) public service announcements and advertisements; and

(c) establishment of toll-free telephone hotlines and electronic services to provide information.

3. The department may produce, make available to others for reproduction, or contract with others to develop such materials mentioned in this section as the commissioner deems appropriate. These materials shall be made available to the public and to educators, including but not limited to elementary and secondary school educators free of charge as appropriate or for a fee under certain circumstances. The commissioner may require where appropriate any health care provider to make these materials available to patients.

4. In exercising any of his or her powers under this section, the commissioner may consult with appropriate health care professionals, providers, consumers, educators and patients or organizations representing them.

5. The commissioner shall ensure that all information and materials produced pursuant to this section are maintained and updated to reflect best practice recommendations.

6. The commissioner may appoint as appropriate advisory councils relating to various matters that are or are proposed to be the subjects of programs under this section. All such councils shall include representation of health care professionals, providers, educators, consumers, patients and other appropriate interests. The members of the councils shall receive no compensation for their services, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in performance of their duties.

7. In addition to state funds appropriated for programs under this section, the commissioner may accept grants from public or private sources for these programs. The commissioner, in administering this section, shall seek to coordinate the department's programs with other public and private programs, and may undertake joint or cooperative programs with other public or private entities, including making grants (within amounts appropriated therefor and consistent with applicable law) to public or not-for-profit entities.

8. The commissioner may make rules and regulations necessary and appropriate for implementation of this section.