§ 238-e. Study of referrals by practitioners. 1. The commissioner may conduct a study of the ownership of or financial interests in health care providers by referring practitioners. Such study shall investigate: (a) the types of such ownership arrangements and types of services offered under such arrangements; (b) the effect of such arrangements on the utilization of health or health related items and services; and (c) the effect of such arrangements on independent providers of similar services.

2. For the purposes of the study authorized by this section, the commissioner is authorized to request and any health care provider or practitioner shall provide, such information regarding those matters which the commissioner is authorized to study pursuant to subdivision one of this section in such form as may be prescribed by the commissioner.

3. Patient and practitioner identifying information collected pursuant to this section shall be confidential and not subject to disclosure.