§ 2997-i. Safe patient handling workgroup. 1. The commissioner shall establish a safe patient handling workgroup (referred to in this section as the "workgroup") within the department. The workgroup shall consist of, at the minimum, the commissioner or his or her designee; the commissioner of labor or his or her designee; representatives of health care provider organizations; representatives from employee organizations representing nurses and representatives from employee organizations representing direct care workers; representatives of nurse executives; representatives who are certified ergonomist evaluation specialists; and representatives who have expertise in fields of discipline related to health care or occupational safety.

2. Workgroup members shall receive no compensation for their services as members of the workgroup, but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

3. The workgroup shall be established no later than January first, two thousand fifteen.

4. The workgroup shall:

(a) Review existing safe patient handling programs or policies, including demonstration programs previously authorized by chapter seven hundred thirty-eight of the laws of two thousand five and national data and results;

(b) Consult with any organization, educational institution, other government entity or agency or person that the workgroup determines may be able to provide information and expertise on the development and implementation of safe patient handling programs;

(c) Identify or develop training materials for consideration by health care facilities; and

(d) Submit a report to the commissioner by July first, two thousand fifteen identifying safe patient handling program best practices, providing examples of sample policies, and identifying resources and tools useful for providers to meet the goals of safe patient handling policies.

5. All state departments, commissions, agencies, and public

authorities shall provide the workgroup with any reasonably requested assistance or advice in a timely manner.