
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE PATIENT NAVIGATION PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that health disparities
2 are most pronounced in Hawai'i's rural Hawaiian communities with
3 Native Hawaiians having higher morbidity and mortality rates for
4 the leading causes of death, including diabetes, cardiovascular
5 disease, and cancer as reported by the Native Hawaiian Health
6 Care Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. 11701), the Office of Hawaiian
7 Affairs, Papa Ola Lokahi, department of health, University of
8 Hawaii department of Native Hawaiian health; and the Moloka'i
9 General Hospital community health needs assessment (2013). The
10 island of Moloka'i, with a population 7,345 of which thirty-two
11 per cent are of Native Hawaiian ancestry, is a federally
12 designated medically underserved area with limited medical
13 services and a shortage of health care providers. The
14 proportion of residents living below poverty is 17.8 per cent,
15 which is higher than the state proportion of 9.6 per cent. The
16 proportion of households with cash public assistance income was
17 double the state rate and unemployment rates are almost triple



1 the state rate. These economic indicators are added challenges
2 to a community with disproportionately higher rates of chronic
3 diseases.

4 Evidence-based patient navigation services at Moloka'i
5 General Hospital were initiated in 2006, and resultant research
6 successfully demonstrated statistically significant increases in
7 cancer screening rates and effective coordination for cancer
8 patients who are referred off-island to cancer treatment care
9 that is unavailable on Moloka'i.

10 In addition to Moloka'i, Hana has a disproportionately high
11 incidence of chronic diseases and mortality which are strongly
12 associated with lifestyle and risk factors. Of all racial
13 groups living in Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians are the racial group
14 with the highest proportion of risk factors leading to illness,
15 disability, and premature death. Native Hawaiians experience
16 high rates of circulatory disease and malignant tumors,
17 particularly respiratory and digestive types. Native Hawaiians
18 living in the Hana district have a high risk health profile
19 resulting in the onset of preventable chronic health conditions
20 and premature death. Sixty-two per cent of Hana Health patients
21 have been identified as high risk for diabetes and hypertension.



1 These statistics are exacerbated by high rates of unemployment,
2 underemployment, and poverty.

3 The legislature further finds that this Act is consistent
4 with the state senate policy known as Ola Lehulehu, or people
5 and communities, to provide funding for Native Hawaiian health
6 care communities. In the area of health care, the policy
7 focuses on:

- 8 (1) Essential social and cultural determinants that
9 improve health outcomes amongst Hawai'i's indigenous
10 population of Native Hawaiians as well as Pacific
11 Islanders;
- 12 (2) Providing options for improved health care for keiki
13 and residents in rural areas; and
- 14 (3) Supporting collaborative efforts to provide better
15 dental care for keiki and adults.

16 Patient navigation services support access to timely care,
17 and patient navigation is now being applied to manage other
18 chronic disease care. The Queen's Medical Center also
19 successfully utilizes cancer patient navigators and is applying
20 this discipline to support patients with chronic disease.



1 The purpose of this Act is to establish and make an
2 appropriation as a grant for a patient navigation program based
3 at Moloka'i General Hospital.

4 SECTION 2. (a) There is established a two-year temporary
5 patient navigation program at Moloka'i General Hospital.

6 (b) The patient navigation program shall:

- 7 (1) Collaborate with The Queen's Medical Center and 'Ahahui
8 O nā Kauka (Association of Native Hawaiian
9 Physicians);
- 10 (2) Have a goal of improving medical outcomes for patients
11 with chronic disease in rural medically underserved
12 areas;
- 13 (3) Focus on increasing access to care for patients with
14 chronic diseases in rural medically underserved rural
15 communities;
- 16 (4) Demonstrate a cost effective protocol to increase
17 timely access to quality medical care for patients
18 with chronic disease in rural medically underserved
19 rural communities;



- 1 (5) Use trained patient navigators of the Kukui Ahi
2 program at Moloka'i General Hospital and The Queen's
3 Medical Center; and
- 4 (6) Apply the positive impact of patient navigation to
5 improve access to medical services, reduce costly
6 sequelae to untreated or undertreated chronic disease,
7 reduce hospital admissions, and promote improved
8 patient outcomes for patients with chronic disease in
9 medically underserved rural communities.
- 10 (c) The results of the patient navigation program shall be
11 shared with and tested by other rural Hawaiian communities such
12 as Hana, island of Maui, that face similar challenges and may
13 benefit from initiatives to improve access to health care that
14 are too costly to establish and maintain within their home
15 community.

16 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and
19 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
20 year 2018-2019 as a grant pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii
21 Revised Statutes, to Moloka'i General Hospital, for a two-year



1 temporary patient navigation program based at Moloka'i General
2 Hospital.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
4 of health for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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Report Title:

Health; Moloka'i Hospital; Patient Navigation Program;
Appropriation

Description:

Makes an appropriation as a grant for a two-year temporary patient navigation program at Moloka'i General Hospital for patients with chronic disease in medically underserved rural communities. (SD1)

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