

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act Concerning Postpartum Mental Health Education**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §262** is enacted to read:

### **§ 262. Prenatal and postpartum mental health**

The commissioner, in conjunction with the Board of Licensure in Medicine, the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists and the State Board of Nursing, shall work with health care facilities and health care practitioners, as defined in section 1711-C, subsection 1, to develop policies and procedures to achieve the requirements of this section concerning prenatal and postpartum mental health in order to improve the mental health of pregnant women and mothers of children up to one year of age.

**1. Prenatal education and screening.** Health care practitioners who provide prenatal care to women shall provide education to pregnant women about prenatal and postpartum mental health and shall screen each woman to identify current mental health issues or risk factors for possible prenatal and postpartum mental health issues.

**2. Postpartum education and screening.** Health care practitioners who provide postpartum care to women and well baby care to infants shall provide education on and screen mothers for postpartum mental health issues as set out in this subsection.

**A.** Health care practitioners in facilities in which babies are born shall:

(1) Prior to her discharge from the facility, screen the mother for postpartum mental health issues; and

(2) At the time of her discharge from the facility, provide to the mother comprehensive information about postpartum mental health issues, including symptoms, methods of coping with postpartum mental health issues and treatment resources.

**B.** Health care practitioners who provide postpartum care to women shall screen a mother for postpartum mental health issues at the first office visit after delivery of the baby.

**C.** Health care practitioners who provide well baby care for infants shall screen the mother for postpartum mental health issues at every well baby check for the first year.

**3. Inclusion** . Health care practitioners providing education and screening under this section shall, with regard to prenatal and postpartum mental health, include the partner, spouse or father and other family members, as appropriate, in education and the treatment process in order to increase their understanding and improve the course of treatment for the mother.

## **SUMMARY**

This bill will provide information on and screening for prenatal and postpartum mental health issues to pregnant women and mothers of children under one year of age and information to the partners, spouses or fathers and family members, as appropriate.