



1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 317

April 29, 1999 - Introduced by Representatives WASSERMAN and COGGS,
cosponsored by Senators BURKE, ROBSON, DARLING, RISSER and CLAUSING.
Referred to Committee on Health.

- 1 **AN ACT to create** 20.435 (5) (cr) and 253.115 of the statutes; **relating to:** infant
2 hearing screening and making an appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires that a hospital, before discharging an infant who was born in or en route to the hospital or who received care in the hospital shortly after birth, or before the infant attains the age of three months, provide a hearing screening test to the infant. If the hearing screening test indicates hearing loss or if the infant was not successfully tested, the hospital must inform the infant's parent and attending physician and provide information concerning appropriate follow-up. The hospital also must refer an infant whose hearing test indicated hearing loss to an audiologist for a diagnostic evaluation. These requirements do not apply if the infant's parent submits a written objection to the test or the diagnostic evaluation for reasons of religion or personal conviction. The bill provides funding from general purpose revenues for payment of the hearing screening tests for infants who are ineligible for medical assistance or the health care program for low-income families known as badger care and for whom coverage of the hearing screening test is not provided under a disability insurance policy or a self-insured health plan.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

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1 (b) If a hearing screening test performed on an infant as specified in par. (a)
2 indicates hearing loss or if the infant was not successfully tested, the hospital shall
3 so notify the infant's parent, guardian or legal custodian and attending physician
4 before discharge, if possible, or otherwise within 10 days after discharge. The
5 hospital shall provide to the infant's parent, guardian or legal custodian information
6 concerning the appropriate follow-up for a hearing screening test that indicated
7 hearing loss or for an instance in which the infant was not successfully tested. If the
8 infant's hearing screening test indicated hearing loss, the hospital shall refer the
9 infant to an audiologist for a diagnostic evaluation.

10 **(3) HEARING SCREENING TEST; FUNDING.** From the appropriation under s. 20.435
11 (5) (cr), the department shall provide funds in each fiscal year to pay for the provision,
12 by hospitals, of hearing screening tests under sub. (2) (a) for infants who are
13 ineligible under s. 49.46, 49.47 or 49.665 and for whom coverage of the hearing
14 screening test is not provided under a disability insurance policy or a self-insured
15 health plan.

16 **(4) PARENTAL OBJECTION.** The requirements under sub. (2) do not apply if the
17 infant's parent, guardian or legal custodian submits a written statement to the
18 hospital objecting to the hearing screening test or to the diagnostic evaluation for
19 reasons of religion or personal conviction. The hospital shall place any such
20 statement in the medical record of the infant.

SECTION 4. Effective date.

21
22 (1) **INFANT HEARING SCREENING TESTS.** This act takes effect on July 1, 1999, or
23 on the day after publication of the 1999-2001 biennial budget act, whichever is later.

24 **(END)**