

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 931 (Delegate Hill, *et al.*)
 Health

Health Care Facilities - Nursing Homes - Medical Director Requirements

This bill requires a physician designated to serve as “medical director” of a nursing home to meet specified requirements. A physician may not be a designated medical director at more than two licensed nursing homes. The bill removes the requirement for the Secretary of Health, in consultation with specified stakeholders, to establish qualifications for a nursing home medical director or anyone acting in their absence. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) must establish and maintain a publicly accessible online directory of nursing home medical directors in the State. MDH must adopt specified regulations. A physician designated as a medical director on or before September 30, 2026, must obtain a “medical director certification” by September 30, 2028. MDH may grant a physician a time-limited extension for obtaining a medical director certification on a showing of good cause.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$85,600 in FY 2027 for staff, as discussed below. Future years reflect annualization and ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	85,600	100,500	105,200	110,000	114,800
Net Effect	(\$85,600)	(\$100,500)	(\$105,200)	(\$110,000)	(\$114,800)

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Medical Director Requirements

“Medical director” means the physician designated by a nursing home to oversee medical care and clinical policies at the nursing home in accordance with federal and State laws and regulations.

“Medical director certification” means: (1) a Certified Medical Director (CMD) certification issued by the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association or (2) an equivalent credential approved by MDH.

To qualify to be designated as a medical director of a nursing home, a physician must hold a valid medical director certification or be making active progress toward obtaining such certification. A physician designated as a medical director must submit to MDH: (1) a copy of their medical director certification or (2) satisfactory evidence of active progress toward obtaining a medical director certification.

Online Directory

MDH must establish and maintain a publicly accessible online directory of nursing home medical directors in the State that includes each medical director’s name, professional credentials, and certification status. Each licensed nursing home must submit the name of the designated medical director to MDH for inclusion in the directory.

Required Regulations

MDH must adopt regulations, including regulations that establish (1) the educational and experiential requirements for a medical director certification that is equivalent to a CMD certification and (2) the process for approving a medical director certification.

Current Law: “Nursing home” means a facility (other than a facility offering domiciliary or personal care) that offers nonacute inpatient care to patients suffering from a disease, chronic illness, condition, disability of advanced age, or terminal disease requiring maximal nursing care without continuous hospital services, and who require medical services and nursing services rendered by or under the supervision of a licensed nurse together with convalescent, restorative, or rehabilitative services.

Each nursing home must designate a physician to serve as medical director. The medical director is responsible for monitoring physician services and must report monthly to the quality assurance committee on the quality of medical care at the nursing home. Under Maryland regulations (COMAR [10.07.02.16](#)), the medical director is also responsible for, among other things:

- overall coordination, execution, and monitoring of physician services;
- monitoring and evaluating health care services and outcomes;
- designating an alternate medical director;
- overseeing all physicians and other licensed or certified professional health care practitioners who provide health care to the facility's residents;
- recommending rules governing the performance of physicians and other licensed or certified professional health care practitioners who admit residents to the facility;
- recommending written policies and procedures;
- ensuring physician accountability;
- participating in the nursing home's quality improvement process; and
- other essential duties related to clinical care and physician practices.

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland, and representatives of the nursing home industry, must: (1) establish qualifications for the medical director of a nursing home or anyone acting for the medical director in his or her absence; (2) define the duties of the medical director; and (3) adopt regulations for the attending physicians who treat residents of nursing homes that will provide for physician accountability.

Maryland regulations (COMAR [10.07.02.15](#)) require a medical director to have the following qualifications: (1) a current license as a physician in the State; (2) a least two years of experience or specialized training in the medical care of geriatric or chronically ill and impaired residents; and (3) successful completion of a curriculum in physician management or administration from The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine or a curriculum approved by MDH. The nursing home must submit a copy of the medical director's credentials to MDH upon a change in the medical director.

State Expenditures: The bill requires MDH to promulgate regulations, review nursing home medical director certifications and offer time-limited extensions (when necessary), ensure that each medical director does not oversee more than two licensed nursing homes, and establish an online directory of medical directors. MDH advises that there are 220 licensed nursing homes in the State, and current staff cannot absorb the additional responsibilities of the bill.

Therefore, MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$85,616 in fiscal 2027, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2026 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one health policy analyst to oversee nursing home medical directors and maintain the directory of medical directors. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	1.0
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$76,475
Operating Expenses	<u>9,141</u>
Total FY 2027 State Expenditures	\$85,616

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

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jg/jc

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