

Physical Fitness, the Advisory Board on Hospital Licensing, the Advisory Council on Hospital Construction, the Radiation Control Advisory Board, the Air Pollution Control Council, the Air Quality Control Council, and the Juvenile Services Administration (Chapter 77, Acts of 1969). Boards and councils relating to radiation and air quality, as well as environmental health programs, were transferred to the Department of the Environment in 1987; the Juvenile Services Administration became an independent agency in 1987 and an executive department in 1988.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has evolved into a complex agency which continues to protect the physical, mental and social health of Marylanders. Through a comprehensive and accessible system of health services, the Department promotes health and prevents disease and disability.

Many health care programs are, by their nature, public functions and cannot be performed effectively by the private sector. Prime among these is the responsibility for dealing with epidemiological hazards to health, such as communicable diseases, and the organization of community efforts to prevent or control their impact.

Local health departments are the focal point in the delivery of services. Overseen by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, twenty-four local health departments report to the Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services and have access to all Department officials as well.

The Department also provides or purchases direct care services. These primarily include residential and outpatient care for the mentally ill; the mentally retarded; the chronically ill, including those with tuberculosis; the impaired elderly; and persons with addictive conditions. Several health services for the community as well as comprehensive health care services for the indigent and medically indigent are provided directly by the Department.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Martin P. Wasserman, M.D., J.D., *Secretary
of Health & Mental Hygiene*

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Appointed by the Governor with Senate advice and consent, the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is responsible for the functions of the Department. The Secretary also directs and coordinates numerous boards, commissions, and citizen advisory groups.

The Secretary serves on the Governor's Executive Council; the Governor's Subcabinet for Children, Youth, and Families; the Advisory Committee for Children, Youth, and Families; the Governor's Council on Adolescent Pregnancy; the Cabinet Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice; and the Governor's Pesticide Council. The Secretary also serves on the Medical Assistance Advisory Committee; the State Health Resources Planning Commission; the Domiciliary Care Facilities Board; the State Commission on Infant Mortality Prevention; the State Information Technology Board; the Interagency Committee on Aging Services; and the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee for Minority Affairs.

Under the Secretary are three deputy secretaries. Each has a specific area of responsibility: Health Care Policy, Finance, and Regulation; Operations; and Public Health Services.

PANEL TO REVIEW OFF-LABEL USES OF DRUGS

David S. Ettinger, M.D., *Chair*

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The Panel to Review Off-Label Uses of Drugs was authorized in 1994 (Chapter 647, Acts of 1994). The Panel reviews particular cases in which there is a dispute about medical insurance payments for off-label use of drugs. The Panel investigates drugs prescribed for treatments other than those approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration and advises the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene whether a particular off-label use is medically appropriate. The Secretary forwards Panel recommendations to the Maryland Insurance Commissioner who may direct insurers to pay for the drug (Code 1957, Art. 48A, sec. 490AA).

The Panel is appointed by the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene.

HEALTH CARE POLICY, FINANCE, & REGULATION

Barbara Shipnuck, *Deputy Secretary for Health
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Health Care Policy, Finance, and Regulation began in 1975 as the Office of Regulatory Services. By 1981, responsibilities of the Office were assigned to the Assistant Secretary for Health Regulation and Policy Analysis and, by 1985, to the Assistant Secretary for Health Regulation. In 1987, the position of Deputy Secretary for Policy, Financing, and Regulation was created, and, in 1988, it became the Deputy Secretary for Health Care Policy, Finance, and Regulation.