CHAPTER 468

(House Bill 454)

AN ACT concerning

Prenatal and Infant Health Care Services - Pay Schedule

FOR the purpose of requiring the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to make an assessment of certain health care services ~~in--consultation--with--the--Health--Services-Cost Review-Commission~~; establishing the criteria and scope of the assessment; requiring ~~the--Secretary-to-report-to-the Joint-Committee-on-Health--Care--Cost--Containment--and--the General--Assembly--by--a-certain-date~~; the Secretary to make certain reports to the General Assembly by certain dates; authorizing certain applicants to receive certain health services; requiring the Secretary to adopt certain regulations; *requiring local health agencies to implement uniform procedures for certain purposes; requiring that reduced rates for certain recipients of certain health care services be applied fairly and uniformly and according to a certain fee scale;* and generally relating to an assessment of health care needs for prenatal and infant care.

BY adding to

Article - Health - General
Section 16-201.1
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1982 Volume and 1986 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, In 1985, between 2,700 and 4,440 expectant mothers in Maryland received late or no prenatal care; and

WHEREAS, The current regulations direct the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to set charges for services based on costs, that the costs of maternity services depend upon a variety of factors and vary according to county, and that current charges range from a low of $26 per visit in one county to a high of $93 in another; and

WHEREAS, It is believed that the current local health agencies ability-to-pay schedule and the practice of quoting fees over the telephone serve as deterrents to the use of health care services; and

WHEREAS, Under the Department's current ability-to-pay schedule, individuals who fall below the poverty level, either are covered by Medicaid or are not charged for services and individuals with incomes between 100 through ~~200~~ 180 percent of