

(II) ANNUALLY PUBLISH THE SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION.

(2) (I) THE PURPOSE OF THE COMPARATIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION IS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CARE PROVIDED BY NURSING FACILITIES BY ESTABLISHING A COMMON SET OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DISSEMINATING THE FINDINGS OF THE COMPARATIVE EVALUATION TO NURSING FACILITIES, CONSUMERS, AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES.

(II) IN DEVELOPING THE COMPARATIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM, THE COMMISSION SHALL CONSIDER THE HEALTH STATUS OF THE POPULATION SERVED.

(3) THE SYSTEM, AS APPROPRIATE, SHALL SOLICIT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FROM CONSUMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

(4) THE COMMISSION MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH THE COMPARATIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before January 1, 2001, the Commission shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the nursing facility comparative evaluation system required by Section 2 of this Act.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That General Fund savings that result from Section 1 of this Act shall be used to increase the payments for services to Program recipients under the nursing services cost center of the Medicaid nursing home reimbursement formula, in accordance with the study conducted pursuant to Chapter 724 of the Acts of 1998.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) There is a Task Force on Quality of Care in Nursing Facilities.

(b) The Task Force shall consist of the following members:

(1) two members of the Senate Finance Committee, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(2) two members of the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(3) four members of the House Environmental Matters Committee, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(4) the Secretary of the Department of Aging;

(5) the Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's designee; and

(6) three representatives of area agencies on aging, appointed by the Secretary of Aging.

(c) The Secretary of Aging shall chair the Task Force.