

Article 15.

State Center for Health Statistics.

§ 130A-371. State Center for Health Statistics established.

A State Center for Health Statistics is established within the Department. (1983, c. 891, s. 2.).

§ 130A-372. Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply throughout this Article:

- (1) "Health data" means information relating to the health status of individuals, the availability of health resources and services, and the use and cost of these resources and services. The term shall not include vital records registered under the provisions of Article 4 of this Chapter.
- (2) "Medical records" means health data relating to the diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental ailments of individuals. (1983, c. 891, s. 2.)

§ 130A-373. Authority and duties.

(a) The State Center for Health Statistics is authorized to:

- (1) Collect, maintain and analyze health data on:
 - a. The extent, nature and impact of illness and disability on the population of the State;
 - b. The determinants of health and health hazards;
 - c. Health resources, including the extent of available work power and resources;
 - d. Utilization of health care;
 - e. Health care costs and financing; and
 - f. Other health or health-related matters; and
- (2) Undertake and support research, demonstrations and evaluations respecting new or improved methods for obtaining data.

(b) The State Center for Health Statistics may collect health data on behalf of other governmental or nonprofit organizations.

(c) The State Center for Health Statistics shall collect data only on a voluntary basis except when there is specific legal authority to compel mandatory reporting of the health data. In collecting health data on a voluntary basis, the State Center for Health Statistics shall give the person a statement in writing:

- (1) That the data is being collected on a voluntary basis and that the person is not required to respond; and
- (2) The purposes for which the health data is being collected.

(d) Subject to the provisions of G.S. 130A-374, the State Center for Health Statistics may share health data with other persons, agencies and organizations.

(e) The State Center for Health Statistics shall:

- (1) Take necessary action to assure that statistics developed under this Article are of high quality, timely and comprehensive, as well as specific and adequately analyzed and indexed; and
- (2) Publish, make available and disseminate statistics on as wide a basis as practical.

(f) The State Center for Health Statistics shall coordinate health data activities within the State in order to eliminate unnecessary duplication of data collection and to maximize the usefulness of data collected by:

- (1) Participating with State and local agencies in the design and implementation of a cooperative system for producing comparable and uniform health information and statistics at the State and local levels; and
- (2) Undertaking and supporting research, development, demonstration and evaluation respecting the cooperative system. (1983, c. 891, s. 2).

§ 130A-374. Security of health data.

(a) Medical records of individual patients shall be confidential and shall not be public records open to inspection. The State Center for Health Statistics may disclose medical records of individual patients which identify the individual described in the record only if:

- (1) The individual described in the medical record has authorized the disclosure; or
- (2) The disclosure is for bona fide research purposes. The Commission shall adopt rules providing for the use of the medical records for research purposes.

(b) The State Center for Health Statistics shall take appropriate measures to protect the security of health data collected by the Center, including:

- (1) Limiting the access to health data to authorized individuals who have received training in the handling of this data;
- (2) Designating a person to be responsible for physical security; and
- (3) Developing and implementing a system for monitoring security. (1983, c. 891, s. 2.)

§§ 130A-375 through 130A-376. Reserved for future codification purposes.