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Madelyn J Miles, *University of Kentucky*

Dr. Sarah Kerckmar, *University of Kentucky*



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## **Understanding government influence on healthcare legislation**

Author: Madelyn J. Miles

Mentor: Sarah Kerscmar

Department: College of Health Sciences

### **Research Objective:**

Healthcare is constantly evolving and changing. One of the strongest influencers in this constant change is the government. In order to completely understand healthcare, one must also be able to understand the legislation involved. For providers, this is important to understand since they need to be aware of the resources available to their patients. Being informed about health laws allows providers to make more educated decisions, understand trends in healthcare, and stay compliant with updated standards. The vocabulary, terminology, and overall process used in legislation can be difficult to understand—especially to a lay audience. This study examines recent healthcare laws in Kentucky to better understand whether current legislation aligns with the greatest health needs of the state and to determine better ways of presenting the information in a way individuals from any educational background can understand.

### **Methods:**

Laws passed in 2017 were selected for review from Kentucky's Legislative Research Commission website and compared to the priorities identified in the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky's "Kentucky Health Issues Poll". Information from the comparison was then translated into a podcast series. Podcasts were uploaded to researcher's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Podcasts include news clips and interviews with professionals who have experience working in areas affected by these new laws. The series consists of six-episodes and was titled "What the Health is Going on?"

### **Conclusions:**

The findings suggest that Kentucky has a strong healthcare presence in legislation and that many of the laws overlapped with the priority issues identified by the Foundation. Although some laws were irrelevant to the greatest issues, they may still play an important role in improving healthcare in the state. Overall, the study findings indicate that Kentucky is taking steps to improve major healthcare issues, but there is still room for priority alignment with legislation.