

Maryland General Assembly Behavioral Health Legislation 2019 Overview

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ST. MARY'S COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Outpatient Mental Health Centers - Medical Directors- Telehealth (SB 178/ HB 0570)

Description: This bill would allow a behavioral health program that is licensed as an outpatient mental health center to allow the medical director to be onsite through the use of Telehealth.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Organizations trying to obtain OMHC certification will now be able to obtain certification through the use of Telehealth.

Status: Approved by the Governor.

Behavioral Health Programs – Outpatient Mental Health Centers – Medical Directors (HB1122)

Description: This bill will allow accredited behavioral health programs to have a psychiatric nurse practitioner to serve as a medical director of outpatient mental health centers.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Small business outpatient mental health centers will be able to more easily hire a medical director due to MDH allowing psychiatric nurse practitioners and other qualified individuals through telehealth to be practicing as medical director onsite at least 20 hours a week.

Status: Passed Enrolled.

Public Health - Prescription Drug Monitoring Program - Revisions (HB25 / SB195)

Description: This bill requires, instead of only authorizing, the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to review prescription monitoring data for indications of prescription drug misuse or violations of laws by prescribers or dispensers.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Opioid prescriptions would be tracked, patients who might be at risk for prescription drug abuse would be identified, and better prescribing practices would be promoted.

Status: Passed Enrolled.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program - Program Evaluation (HB466 / SB342)

Description: This bill requires the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to provide their data to the Office of the Attorney General and any authorized local to federal organization involved in medical care provision.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: The PDMP has been and will continue to help MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, as the program decreases the chance of over-prescribing opioids to patients. Data allows identification of patients who could be at risk for abusing opioids.

Status: HB466 Approved by the Governor.

Public Health - Maternal Mortality Review Program - Establishment of Local Teams (SB 602, HB 796)

Description: The bill would allow each county in Maryland to establish a maternal mortality review team that would be comprised of multiple disciplines and agencies that would work to prevent maternal deaths.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: SMCHD would be authorized to increase expenditures to establish a local maternal mortality review team. A multicounty team is allowed. Maternal, Child and Elder Health Program would likely be involved.

The local health officer would be required to be a review team member, and would have the responsibility to convene any meetings.

Status: HB796 Returned Passed.

Prenatal and Infant Care Coordination - Grant Funding and Task Force (SB406/HB520)

Description: This bill would establish the Task Force on Maryland Maternal and Child Health, staffed by the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland Department of Human Services, the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, and the Health Services Cost Review Commission. The Task Force will make recommendations to the Maryland General Assembly on how MDH and Maryland state policies can be used to prevent adverse health outcomes. Effective July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: The Task Force will provide their findings and suggestions to the Maryland General Assembly, ultimately providing insight that St. Mary's County and Health Department programs may utilize.

Status: Passed Enrolled.

Maryland Department of Health - Capital and Grant Programs - State Grants (HB155/SB164)

Description: This Governor's bill increases the eligible cost percentages of projects that Maryland state funding will cover using the Community Mental Health, Addiction, and Developmental Disabilities Capital Program or Federally Qualified Health Centers Grant Program.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Local revenues for projects will increase due to an increase of available State grant funding. Local matching expenditures will decrease to this extent as well.

Status: Returned Passed.

Maryland Department of Health - Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities - Fee-For-Service Payment Pilot Program (HB1420)

Description: This bill will require that the MDH establishes a fee-for-service (FFS) payment pilot program for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) will establish a pilot FFS program to test how smoothly the Long-Term Services Supports System (LTSS) network will transition to FFS.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: This is still only a pilot program, so no effects on our county or SMCHD are expected.

Status: Returned Passed.

Health Insurance – Coverage for Mental Health Benefits and Substance Use Disorder Benefits – Treatment Criteria (HB599/SB631)

Description: This bill requires health insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to use American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Enforcing the use of ASAM criteria will provide patients in St. Mary's County with more regulated and consistent access to care.

Status: Approved by the Governor.

Health Insurance - Coverage Requirements for Behavioral Health Disorders - Short-Term Limited Duration Insurance (SB28)

Description: This bill alters the definition of “health benefit plan” to include short-term limited duration health insurance. This is to make sure that Maryland’s mental health parity law applies to this insurance type as well.

Effect on St. Mary’s County/SMCHD: St. Mary’s residents who rely on this health insurance coverage with a policy term of less than three months will be able to receive health benefits in line with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act.

Status: Approved by the Governor.

Public Health - Correctional Services - Opioid Use Disorder Examinations and Treatment (SB846/HB116)

Description: This bill would require local correctional facilities to conduct assessments and examinations of inmates within 24 hours of incarceration to determine the mental health and substance use status of each inmate to determine if opioid addiction treatment should be provided to the inmates.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: St. Mary's County detention centers have volunteered to be in the first round of this program. The State will fund opioid use disorder screenings, examinations, and treatment of inmates.

Status: HB116 Passed Enrolled.

Opioid Restitution Fund (HB1274)

Description: This bill will establish the Opioid Restitution Fund that will be composed of any revenues received by the State of Maryland for opioid judgements and settlements with opioid manufacturers, opioid research associations, or other related companies. The fund will only be available for opioid-related programs and services.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Qualified St. Mary's County organizations working to mitigate the effects of the opioid crisis will have more resources to combat the opioid epidemic in our county.

Status: Returned Passed.

Medical Cannabis - Regulation of Dispensaries, Growers, and Processors (SB426)

Description: This bill will allow the Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Cannabis Commission to issue more than one medical cannabis grower license to applicants. A person will not be allowed to have ownership of more than one grower or processor. A person will not be allowed to have ownership of more than four licensed dispensaries.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: A licensed dispensary in the county currently limited to owning one licensed dispensary will be able to own up to four licensed dispensaries in total July 1, 2019.

Status: Returned Passed.

Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Cannabis Commission – Processing and Dispensing Medical Cannabis (SB857/HB17)

Description: Licensed medical cannabis dispensaries and processors would be allowed to sell edible cannabis products (cannabis products that dissolve in the mouth).

Research organizations would be allowed to register with the Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Cannabis Commission to purchase medical cannabis. The length of time a medical cannabis license holder needs to be actively involved in the cannabis industry before there is a sale or transfer of license ownership increases from 2 to 3 years.

Medical cannabis advertisements are restricted.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Southern Maryland Relief in Mechanicsville will be able to sell edible cannabis products to patients.

Status: HB17 Returned Passed.

Veteran Suicide Prevention - Comprehensive Action Plan (SB521)

Description: This bill requires the MDH to create an action plan by July 1, 2020 to increase professional veteran health services to decrease veteran suicides. This action plan will include both short-term initiatives and reforms (implemented by July 1, 2021) and long-term initiatives and reforms (implemented by July 1, 2023).

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: Healthy St. Mary's Partnership BHAT priority to reduce the rates of suicide in our community will be aided by the efforts of the MDH to create the care plan. MDH will collaborate with specified interested parties to develop the plan.

Status: Approved by the Governor.

Criminal Law - Decriminalization of Attempted Suicide (HB77)

Description: This bill would repeal the common law that states attempted suicide is a crime, while establishing that other crimes committed during an attempted suicide are still chargeable offenses.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: The common law designating a suicide attempt as a chargeable offense is rarely put to use, as just one man in Caroline County pleaded guilty in the past five years.

St. Mary's criminal justice system would not be legally able to charge an individual for an attempted suicide, but would still be able to charge for any other crimes committed during the attempt.

Status: Passed Enrolled.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future (SB1030/ HB1413)

Description: In its impacts on behavioral health, this bill will provide \$83,333 per year in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to each local school system in order to fund a mental health services coordinator for each school district. In schools in which at least 80% of students meet the requirements for free and reduced-price meals, a Concentration of Poverty School Grant Program will provide increased resources to these schools.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: St. Mary's County school district will receive \$83,000 to fund a mental health services coordinator in 2020 and 2021.

St. Mary's County school district will receive \$249,000 from the Concentration of Poverty Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2021.

Status: SB1030 Passed Enrolled.

Primary and Secondary Education - Community Schools - Established (SB661/ HB733)

Description: This bill will establish community schools, which are public schools in Maryland that have strategic partnerships with community resources to advance a focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and familial and community engagement. Each of these schools will have a community school coordinator. Public school funding will be made available to community schools.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: The local SMCPS system, if they were to consider the establishment of a community school(s), would incur some cost to review potential plans. Schools would have a community school coordinator specifically aiding in partnerships that would increase student access to economic, educational, behavioral health, and familial resources.

Status: SB661 Passed Enrolled.

Public Schools - School Psychologists - Reports (HB844)

Description: This bill will require each local school system in Maryland to submit an interim report (by July 1, 2020) and final report (by December 1, 2020) concerning school psychologists in their system. The reports must include information on each school's current school psychologist to student ratio, and include suggestions on how to reach a ratio of at least one school psychologist per 700 students.

Effect on St. Mary's County/SMCHD: This study will help to advance the effort of providing the children in St. Mary's with imperative mental health counseling services. There is no associated cost, as staff in the school system would already be on payroll.

Status: Returned Passed.

Questions?

My email: allyson.j.myers@gmail.com

2019 Behavioral Health Legislation Briefs Link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1shPOx2fXYWS6zzOx2xbQlRekOt2aXNiiyM7H2vuxxxE/edit?usp=sharing>