



Senate Finance Committee

February 18, 2020

Senate Bill 453

**Behavioral Health Administration - Children With Mental Disorders – List of Available Services
Support with Amendments**

NCADD-Maryland whole heartedly supports Senate Bill 453. Finding the right services to meet our children’s behavioral health needs is not an easy task. Finding the most appropriate, affordable and accessible services and programs can take many hours, and sometimes ends with no good options. The proposal in SB 453 is to make sure the State maintains a list of services and updates it regularly is not difficult to execute and essential to save lives.

In the 21st century, it should take no more than a few minutes to get online, search for services in a geographic area needed that are targeted to the appropriate age group, and find a list of programs and services to contact. This is important for any kind of service we may be seeking for our children, let along mental health or substance use disorder services. The amendments we seek include:

- 1) Making this list available as an online directory, searchable by geography, level of care, and age range served;
- 2) Including both mental health and substance use disorder services in the directory; and
- 3) Requiring the Behavioral Health Administration to keep the list constantly updated, with accurate information about what insurances the programs accept (public and private).

People cannot get help, get well, and maintain recovery if they can’t even figure out where to start. NCADD-Maryland is aware of the 2-1-1 resource that includes an online directory. Those utilizing the website have found the information to be incomplete and not inclusive of information about the ages of people served. Perhaps the 2-1-1 system could be the foundation on which this directory is built. We need to make finding services as easy as possible. It’s smart public health policy.

We urge your support of SB 453 with amendments. NCADD-Maryland is committed to work with the sponsors, other supporters, and the Behavioral Health Administration on amendment language to achieve our common goal.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.