



Committee: Health and Government Operations

Bill Number: HB 317

Title: Mental Health – Involuntary Admissions – Procedures

Hearing Date: February 12, 2020

Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *House Bill 317 – Mental Health – Involuntary Admissions – Procedures*. This bill sets requirements in statute for the observation and discharge of individuals with mental disorders following an involuntary admission.

Currently, the Behavioral Health Administration has regulations under COMAR 10.21.01.07, which requires a psychiatrist to examine an individual confined to observation status within 24 hours of an involuntary admission. MNA fully supports this bill as it would codify into law the 24 hour examination requirement, while also specifying that a psychiatric nurse practitioners can conduct the examination.

Considering the nationwide shortage of psychiatrists along with existing law that permits psychiatric nurse practitioners to examine and provide certification for an involuntary admission, this bill is a common sense approach to ensuring that individuals who are involuntarily admitted receive an examination as soon as possible to determine the most appropriate treatment setting.ⁱ

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ §10–616 of the Health-General Article – Involuntary Admissions – Certificates.