



Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall,
Secretary

02/18/2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB0448 - Health Care Practitioners - Telehealth – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (“the Board”) respectfully submits this letter of support for HB0448 – Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth. This bill authorizes nurse practitioners to establish a practitioner-patient relationship through both synchronous and asynchronous interactions under certain circumstances. The bill requires a health care practitioner providing telehealth services to be held to the same standards of practice that are applicable to in-person settings. Additionally, the health care practitioner must perform a clinical evaluation appropriate for the condition the patient presents before providing certain treatment or issuing a prescription through telehealth.

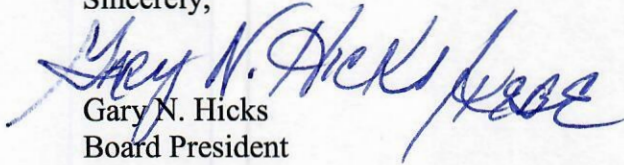
The Board feels that this bill has substantial value for promoting access to care, particularly for patients in rural areas. The bill establishes the standard for the practice of telehealth and proactively addresses patient safety concerns by requiring that a health care practitioner providing telehealth services be held to the same standards of practice that are applicable to in-patient settings. Practitioners who prescribe a controlled dangerous substance are subject to any applicable regulation, limitation, and prohibition in federal and State law relating to prescription of controlled dangerous substances.

The bill explicitly requires a health care practitioner providing health care services through telehealth must be licensed in the state if the health care services are being provided to a patient located in the state. This aligns with Maryland’s Nursing License Compact allowing nurses the privilege to practice in other compact states. Currently, these nurses which include nurse practitioners, can practice in a compact state and are required to practice according to the statutes and regulations governing nursing practice in that state.

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing submits this letter of support for HB0448.

For more information, please contact Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) – 585 – 1953 (rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov) or Karen E. B. Evans, Executive Director, at (410) – 585 – 1914 (karene.evans@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary N. Hicks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "G" and "H".

Gary N. Hicks
Board President

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.