



Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group, P.C.
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

February 18, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building Room 240
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 448 – Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support and offer an amendment to HB 448, Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth.

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for approximately 755,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to over 430,000 members.

This bill allows a health care practitioner to establish a practitioner-patient relationship through either a synchronous or asynchronous telehealth interaction. A healthcare practitioner providing telehealth services must be held to the same standards of practice that are applicable to in-person health care settings. The bill also requires a healthcare practitioner to perform a clinical evaluation that is appropriate for the patient and the condition with which the patient presents before providing treatment or issuing a prescription through telehealth.

Kaiser Permanente is a strong proponent of telehealth technologies. KP provides e-visits for an expanding set of low acuity conditions, like cold symptoms, dysuria, and pink eye, and a birth control e-visit will be available later in 2020. However, KP wants to ensure that if a health care provider uses synchronous or asynchronous telehealth interaction to perform a clinical evaluation, the health care provider, or another provider in the practice, is available to perform a follow-up clinical evaluation for the patient as needed. For this reason, we request the amendment provided below.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation's largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente's members.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact Wayne Wilson at Wayne.D.Wilson@kp.org or (301) 816-5991 with questions.

Sincerely,

Wayne D. Wilson
Vice President, Government Programs and External Relations
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 448
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 3, in line 17, after “SUBSECTION” insert “**IF THE HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER, OR ANOTHER HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER IN THE SAME PRACTICE, IS ABLE TO PERFORM A FOLLOW-UP CLINICAL EVALUATION AS NEEDED BY THE PATIENT**”.