



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee
Bill Number: House Bill 1208
Title: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program
Hearing Date: March 4, 2020
Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *House Bill 1208 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program*. This bill would require the Maryland Medicaid program to create a pilot program to study providing telehealth services, including behavioral health, where the recipient can be in any location.

LCPCM was pleased to see Medicaid amend their regulations in the fall of 2019, expanding the list of providers eligible for reimbursement for telehealth services, including licensed clinical professional counselors (LCPCs). Unfortunately, the regulations continue to require an individual receiving health services be located in a secondary health care setting from the clinician. This secondary site is referred to as the “originating site”. This often negates the convenience and practicality of receiving services via telehealth.

Of particular hardship are individuals seeking mental health treatment at regular intervals such as those with a weekly appointment schedule. While many mental health clinicians provide evening hours to accommodate school and work schedules, health care offices and clinics may not choose to remain open in the evenings for the sole purpose of providing a physical location to meet Medicaid’s originating site requirement. Given the existing barriers in accessing mental health treatment, this structure doesn’t make sense and we strongly support studying alternative telehealth models to ensure individuals can services when and where they can access them.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or 410-693-4000.