

MidAtlantic BUSINESS GROUP ON HEALTH

House Bill 0048
Collaborative Care Implementation and Reimbursement
Health and Government Operations Committee
February 7, 2023
Position: SUPPORT

The MidAtlantic Business Group on Health is a coalition that helps companies achieve cost-effectively, high-quality healthcare for employees and dependents; collaborates with other community stakeholders; and represents the healthcare purchasers' voice. We appreciate this opportunity to present this testimony in support of House Bill 0048.

House Bill 0048 expands reimbursement from an existing Collaborative Care Model pilot program to be statewide in primary care settings that provide health care services to Program recipients.

Employers are very concerned with the difficulty that their employees and dependents face when seeking mental health support. Every day, company Human Resource officers share the frustration of employees seeking effective behavioral health care. We understand that most of these individuals receive this support from their primary care healthcare provider, especially given the difficulty they have getting appointments with behavioral health specialists.

However, primary care providers are not specially trained to diagnose and treat behavioral health, which means that care delivered in the primary care setting can be less than optimal. This results in additional anguish for employees and their children, and it also impacts overall healthcare costs. Studies show that patients with behavioral health conditions have MEDICAL/SURGICAL costs that are 3-5 times higher than patients with no behavior health condition. The Collaborative Care Model can alleviate this problem, by supporting primary care clinicians in delivering behavioral health services.

The MidAtlantic Business Group on Health encourages all businesses to pay for Mental Health Collaborative Care. The weight of the Maryland Medical Assistance Program would speed adoption of the Collaborative Care Model, which will lower healthcare costs, but more importantly, ease the burden of behavioral health conditions for employees and their dependents.

For this reason, the MidAtlantic Business Group on Health supports House Bill 0048.

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