

February 7, 2023

Testimony on House Bill 48
**Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Collaborative Care Model Services –
Implementation and Reimbursement Expansion**
House Health and Government Operations Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1500 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We strongly urge you to support House Bill 48 – improve the quality of behavioral health care delivered in primary care settings for Maryland Medicaid recipients by expanding their access to the proven Collaborative Care Model (CoCM).

CoCM is a validated, patient-centered, evidence-based approach for integrating physical and behavioral health care in primary care settings, which is where most people with mild to moderate behavioral health conditions first seek care. The model uses a team-based approach to deliver (1) care coordination and management; (2) regular, systematic monitoring and treatment using a validated clinical rating scale; and (3) regular, systematic behavioral health caseload reviews and consultation for patients. CoCM has been validated in over 80 randomized controlled trials and shown to improve health outcomes and save money, mostly via a reduction in unnecessary hospitalization and higher intensity levels of care.

Commercial health insurers in Maryland and Medicare are already reimbursing providers for delivering this model. An ongoing CoCM pilot in the Maryland Medicaid program has demonstrated “clinically significant improvement” in depression and anxiety symptoms for more than 65 percent of participants. It is time to end the pilot and join the 20+ other states that are providing CoCM broadly to their Medicaid recipients.

House Bill 48 offers the opportunity to improve outcomes and save state resources, while addressing a mental health crisis worsened by the continuing pandemic. **For these reasons we urge a Favorable Report on HB 48.**