



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 791 – Health Insurance – Utilization Review – Revisions

Hearing Date: February 21, 2024

Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports Senate Finance 791 – *Health Insurance – Utilization Review – Revisions*. The bill would alter the requirements for providers and carriers related to health insurance utilization review which would include the provisions regarding benchmarks for standardizing and automating the preauthorization process, and the online preauthorization system for payors, and preauthorization for prescription drugs, and private review agents. Additionally, the bill would alter the timelines related to internal grievance procedures and adverse decision procedures.

MNA supports this legislation because the current law, in practice, has created more hurdles and roadblocks for providers trying to deliver care to their patients, and most importantly timely care to their patients. The current prior authorization process often involves lengthy wait times and unnecessary administrative burdens for healthcare providers. This can delay patients' access to necessary treatments and services, resulting in potential harm or deteriorating health conditions. It is crucial that these requirements are revised to ensure that patients receive timely and appropriate care without unnecessary obstacles.

The current system also places an undue burden on healthcare providers. The administrative tasks associated with obtaining prior authorizations can be time-consuming and take away valuable resources that could be better utilized for direct patient care. By updating the utilization review requirements, providers can focus on delivering high-quality care to their patients. It is evident that the current system primarily benefits insurance carriers. The strict authorization requirements often lead to denials or delays in approvals, allowing insurance companies to save costs. However, this approach disregards the best interests of patients who

may be left without essential treatments or forced to seek alternatives that may not be as effective.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Michael Paddy at mpadd@policypartners.net.