



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary
February 6, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill (HB) 665 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance
- Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits - Coverage and Reimbursement – Letter
of Information**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 665 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits - Coverage and Reimbursement.

HB 665 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid), including managed care organizations (MCOs), to provide coverage for annual behavioral health wellness visits regardless of the assessment resulting in a behavioral health diagnosis, and to provide reimbursement on the same basis and at the same rate as an assessment that results in a behavioral health diagnosis. Medicaid covers primary behavioral health services through its MCOs in accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 10.67.06.26.¹ As drafted, the Department assumes these services would meet the requirements of HB 665.

The Medicaid notes that both Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) and the Collaborative Care Model (CoCM) are covered today as primary behavioral health services. SBIRT services consist of a screening that quickly assesses the severity of substance use and identifies the appropriate level of treatment, a brief intervention focused on increasing insight and awareness regarding substance use and motivation toward behavioral change, and when appropriate, a referral to treatment for those identified as needing more extensive treatment through specialty care. CoCM is an established evidence-based, patient-centered care model used to improve behavioral health in primary care settings. CoCM uses a team-based approach to integrate and increase the effectiveness of mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment while reducing stigma around these conditions.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

¹ COMAR 10.67.06.26: <https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/10.67.06.26.aspx>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Herrera Scott', with a stylized, flowing script.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary