



“Advocating for Nurse Practitioners since 1992”

2/4/2025

Re: HB 665 Maryland and Insurance – Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits – Coverage and Reimbursement

Position: **Support**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the over 850 members of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, I submit support for HB 665, which aligns with our goal of promoting early intervention and holistic care to our patients.

Advocating for prevention and early detection:

Annual behavioral health assessments would allow providers to identify early signs of mental illness, behavioral changes, or psychological stressors that may otherwise go unnoticed, particularly in underserved populations.

Improving access to Mental Health Services:

For many patients, accessing behavioral health care can be a challenge due to stigma, lack of resources, or financial barriers. Including behavioral health in routine annual visits would normalize mental health care as a part of overall health assessment and remove barriers to early diagnosis and treatment.

Enhancing provider-patient relationships:

Regular behavioral health screenings can foster trust and communication between providers and patients, creating opportunities to address mental health concerns more openly.

Reducing long-term health care costs:

By addressing behavioral health concerns early, this bill has the potential to decrease the burden on emergency services, hospitalizations, and the need for more intensive mental health interventions later in time.

Thank you for considering our comments. We ask for a favorable report for HB 665.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our association via NPAM Executive Director, Malinda Duke, at npamexecdir@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

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