

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1118 (Delegate Hammen)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

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Community Health Resources Commission Fund - Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

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This bill specifies that the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC), when developing regulations that establish the criteria for awarding grants, must give priority to a community health resource (CHR) center that provides a clinical home for individuals who access hospital emergency departments for substance abuse services. Currently, priority is given to a CHR that provides a clinical home for individuals who access hospital emergency departments only for mental health services.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill changes the type of CHR to which CHRC must give priority when determining grants. To the extent it requires administrative changes, CHRC could handle them with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful. Small business CHRs that provide a clinical home for individuals who access hospital emergency rooms for substance abuse services would receive priority over those that do not for grants awarded by CHRC.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Chapter 280 of 2005 established CHRC to increase access to health care for lower-income individuals and to provide resources to CHRs around the State. A CHR may be a federally-qualified health center, a community health center, a health care

program for the homeless, or other community-based health care program that provides health services for lower-income, uninsured individuals.

CHRC must administer grant programs that help CHRs expand; develop an outreach program to educate and inform individuals of the availability of CHRs; and assist lower-income, uninsured individuals with accessing health care services through CHRs. CHRC must also establish a specialty care network for eligible lower-income individuals.

Currently, CHRC must give grant award priority to CHRs that provide a clinical home for individuals who access hospital emergency departments for mental health services.

**Background:** CHRC's fiscal 2007 budget allowance is \$8.2 million.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Medicaid, Mental Hygiene Administration, Developmental Disabilities Administration), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2006  
ncs/jr

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