

SENATE BILL 870

J1, J3

6lr3016
CF HB 1092

By: **Senator A. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 6, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Health – Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Beds –**
3 **Reports on Capacity in Prince George’s County and Report and Outcomes**

4 FOR the purpose of ~~requiring the Maryland Department of Health to ensure the~~
5 ~~establishment and ongoing operation of a minimum number of licensed adolescent~~
6 ~~psychiatric inpatient beds in Prince George’s County; requiring, under certain~~
7 ~~circumstances, the Department to issue a request for proposals to establish~~
8 ~~adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds in the county and to administer a certain grant~~
9 ~~program;~~ requiring the Maryland Department of Health to report to the Governor
10 and the General Assembly on certain information related to adolescent psychiatric
11 inpatient bed capacity in the State; requiring the Department to report to the
12 Governor and the General Assembly on certain information related to outcomes for
13 adolescents receiving care in adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds; and generally
14 relating to adolescent psychiatric inpatient bed capacity and outcomes.

15 ~~BY adding to~~
16 ~~Article Health General~~
17 ~~Section 19-310.7~~
18 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~
19 ~~(2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

20 Preamble

21 WHEREAS, Maryland hospitals experience pediatric psychiatric overstay and
22 boarding pressures, and State law recognizes the occurrence of pediatric psychiatric

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 overstays and the need to transfer youth to appropriate treatment settings when clinically
2 indicated; and

3 WHEREAS, Prince George's County has experienced reductions in adolescent
4 psychiatric inpatient service capacity, including the revocation of adolescent psychiatric
5 inpatient bed licenses; and

6 WHEREAS, The Maryland Department of Health maintains a statewide psychiatric
7 bed registry and referral system to identify available inpatient psychiatric beds and to
8 coordinate behavioral health placement; and

9 WHEREAS, State and local behavioral health planning documents identify an
10 ongoing need to expand and strengthen the quality and availability of behavioral health
11 services for children and youth; now, therefore,

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That ~~the Laws of Maryland read as follows:~~

14 ~~Article — Health — General~~

15 ~~19-310.7.~~

16 (A) (1) ~~IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS~~
17 ~~INDICATED.~~

18 (2) ~~“ADOLESCENT” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL AT LEAST 12 YEARS OLD~~
19 ~~AND UNDER THE AGE OF 17 YEARS.~~

20 (3) ~~“ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BED” MEANS A UNIT OF~~
21 ~~LICENSED INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC CAPACITY THAT PROVIDES OVERNIGHT,~~
22 ~~24 HOUR, FACILITY-BASED PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION, STABILIZATION, AND~~
23 ~~TREATMENT FOR ADOLESCENTS.~~

24 (B) (1) ~~THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PRINCE~~
25 ~~GEORGE'S COUNTY LOCAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AUTHORITY, SHALL ENSURE THE~~
26 ~~ESTABLISHMENT AND ONGOING OPERATION OF AT LEAST 24 ADOLESCENT~~
27 ~~PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BY:~~

28 (i) ~~EXPANDING THE LICENSED INPATIENT BED CAPACITY AT~~
29 ~~AN EXISTING INPATIENT FACILITY IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY;~~

30 (ii) ~~CONTRACTING WITH A PRIVATE OR NONPROFIT OPERATOR~~
31 ~~THAT WILL ESTABLISH AND OPERATE A LICENSED ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC~~
32 ~~INPATIENT FACILITY; OR~~

1 ~~(H) ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO~~
2 ~~FINANCE AND OPERATE ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS.~~

3 ~~(2) IN CARRYING OUT PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE~~
4 ~~DEPARTMENT SHALL PRIORITIZE SOLUTIONS THAT:~~

5 ~~(I) REDUCE PEDIATRIC PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY~~
6 ~~DEPARTMENT BOARDING AND INPATIENT OVERSTAYS;~~

7 ~~(II) ARE REFLECTED IN AND MEASURABLE THROUGH THE~~
8 ~~STATE'S INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC BED REGISTRY AND REFERRAL SYSTEM; AND~~

9 ~~(III) ENSURE ACCESS REGARDLESS OF PAYER SOURCE,~~
10 ~~INCLUDING THE MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.~~

11 ~~(3) (I) IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT EXPANDING BED~~
12 ~~CAPACITY UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION WILL NOT MEET THE~~
13 ~~DEADLINE ESTABLISHED UNDER PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION, ON OR~~
14 ~~BEFORE JUNE 30, 2027, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ISSUE A REQUEST FOR~~
15 ~~PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH THE ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS.~~

16 ~~(H) A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ISSUED UNDER~~
17 ~~SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED TO, AT A~~
18 ~~MINIMUM, PRIVATE OR NONPROFIT OPERATORS WITH DEMONSTRATED~~
19 ~~EXPERIENCE IN ESTABLISHING ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BED~~
20 ~~CAPACITY IN THE STATE.~~

21 ~~(4) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2028, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL~~
22 ~~ENSURE THAT THE ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS REQUIRED UNDER~~
23 ~~PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION ARE FULLY OPERATIONAL AND AVAILABLE~~
24 ~~FOR PATIENT ADMISSION.~~

25 ~~(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER A COMPETITIVE GRANT~~
26 ~~PROGRAM TO ESTABLISH THE ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS~~
27 ~~REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.~~

28 ~~(2) (I) GRANT FUNDS AWARDED UNDER A PROGRAM~~
29 ~~ADMINISTERED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE DISBURSED~~
30 ~~ONLY TO:~~

31 ~~1. HOSPITALS;~~

32 ~~2. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITIES;~~

SENATE BILL 870

~~3. NONPROFIT HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS; OR~~

~~4. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.~~

~~(H) GRANT FUNDS AWARDED UNDER A PROGRAM ADMINISTERED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE USED ONLY FOR THE FOLLOWING CAPITAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH OPERATING THE ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT BEDS:~~

~~1. RENOVATION;~~

~~2. CONSTRUCTION;~~

~~3. SAFETY OR LIGATURE UPGRADES; OR~~

~~4. WORKFORCE START-UP EXPENSES.~~

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:~~

(a) On or before ~~October~~ December 1, 2027 2026, and annually thereafter until 2030, the Maryland Department of Health shall report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly on:

(1) the number and location of licensed adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds by county;

(2) metrics for pediatric psychiatric emergency department boarding and overstay;

(3) any barriers to staffing licensed adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds, including licensure barriers; and

(4) recommendations for rate or regulatory changes needed to maintain sufficient capacity of licensed adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds.

(b) The Department shall use available data systems, including the State inpatient psychiatric registry and referral system, to generate data for the report required under subsection (a) of this section.

~~SECTION 2.~~ 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) On or before December 1, 2026, the Maryland Department of Health, in consultation with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors and the Prince George's County local behavioral health authority, shall study and report to the

1 Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General
2 Assembly on the resources, staffing parameters, treatment plans, and therapeutic
3 environments that would ensure:

4 (1) the best possible outcomes for adolescents receiving care in adolescent
5 psychiatric inpatient beds; and

6 (2) that the correct services are provided to the adolescents.

7 (b) The Maryland Department of Health may partner with relevant organizations
8 in conducting the study under subsection (a) of this section.

9 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect ~~July~~
10 June 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.