



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 409-Maryland Medical Assistance Program-Participation of School Based Health Centers-Regulation

Position: *Support as Amended in the House*

March 17, 2020

Senate Finance Committee

MHA Position

Maryland's 61 nonprofit hospitals and health systems care for millions of people each year, treating 2.3 million in emergency departments and delivering more than 67,000 babies. The 108,000 people they employ are [caring for Maryland](#) around-the-clock every day—delivering leading edge, high-quality medical services.

Increasingly hospitals reach beyond their four walls to ensure their communities have access to the care they need. That includes partnerships with community providers like school-based health centers (SBHCs), which provide comprehensive health services to elementary and secondary school students on school campuses. Services vary, but overall they deliver primary care, mental health, oral health, case management, screening and preventive interventions, as well as ancillary and support services to pre-kindergarteners through 12th graders at school or on school property.

SBHCs play an essential role in reducing social and environmental determinants that prevent children and their families from accessing medical and mental health care. Offering such access to school-based health services improves health outcomes—especially among disadvantaged students—which advances health equity in our state.

Under Maryland's Total Cost of Care Model, hospitals are focused on whole person care. As such, one of the Maryland Hospital Association's strategic goal is for all Marylanders to have access to appropriate care and support. To do this, we recognize the importance of partnering with public agencies and private groups in our communities, such as educational entities, to address social determinants of health. As such, more partnerships between SBHCs and hospitals could decrease health disparities among children and adolescents, which will improve their health into adulthood.

To ensure students receive high quality health care services, SBHCs partner with other agencies to sponsor their clinical and managerial operations. The level of support and individual/shared responsibilities of operating the SBHCs are typically defined in an agreement between the SBHC and its sponsoring agency. Hospitals are considered an appropriate sponsor given their experience in delivery care and operations.¹ House Bill 409 would allow hospitals to be recognized as potential sponsors for school-based health centers by Maryland's Medical

Assistance Program. These partnerships would support the health of Maryland's children and the population as a whole.

For these reasons, we urge a *favorable* report on HB 409 as amended in the House.

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Witten

Jwitten@mhaonline.org

ⁱ Sponsoring agencies have a written agreement with the SBHC to provide funding, staffing, medical oversight and or liability insurance. Other examples of sponsoring agencies include private medical practices, nurse practitioner clinics, and university medical centers and managed care organizations. For more information see: www.healthinschools.org/issue-areas/school-based-health-centers/state-policies-program-guidance/quality-guidelines-oregon/sponsoring-agency-facility/#sthash.jsgAkHac.dpbs