

**Maryland Medical Assistance Program- Emergency Service Transporters and Emergency Medical
Services Providers - Reimbursement
House Bill 779**

Before the Health and Government Operations Committee

**March 4, 2020
Position: Support**

The University of Maryland Medical System (“UMMS”) supports House Bill 779. UMMS is a 13-member hospital health system serving communities in urban, suburban and rural jurisdictions throughout the state.

Four of our hospitals in Baltimore, Prince George’s County, the Mid-Shore and Southern Maryland, are engaged in a special pilot mobile integrated health program with EMS. These pilots allow EMS providers to provide health care services to community residents in their homes when appropriate. These mobile integrated home visits have shown their worth by preventing unnecessary ambulance trips and ER visits among high utilizers of 911.

Communities located in urban areas of the state encounter overcrowded emergency rooms and long wait times for healthcare services; communities in our rural geographic regions face healthcare delivery challenges due to distance and lack of transportation. Mobile integrated health programs effectively reduce emergency room visits, overcrowding and overutilization, and ensure care to patients who might not otherwise have access.

Currently, EMS providers are only reimbursed when they transport a patient to the hospital. These mobile integrated health programs are grant funded, thus long-term sustainability is at risk. Accordingly, it is important to explore mechanisms that reimburse emergency medical services providers to enable them to continue the services they provide, at least for the Medicaid population. Passage of HB 779 would allow emergency medical service providers to be reimbursed by the State for responding to emergency calls and providing mobile integrated health services.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 779.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna L. Jacobs, Esq.
UMMS Senior Vice President,
Government, Regulatory Affairs and Community Health
University of Maryland Medical System