



**House Health and Government Relations Committee
March 4, 2020**

**House Bill 1140
Health - Mobile Response and Stabilization System for Children and Families
in Maryland - Study**

Support

The National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence-Maryland supports House Bill 1140 which requires the Maryland Department of Health and the Governor's Commission to Study Mental Health and Behavioral Health in Maryland to jointly develop a comprehensive mobile response and stabilization system for children and families.

NCADD-Maryland has great concern about the insufficient amount of services in Maryland for children and adolescents who have mental health and substance use disorders. There has been a steady reduction in the last five years of both in-patient and outpatient services for youth across the state. While there has been more attention paid lately to ensuring access to mental health services to students in schools, this is not enough. There must be a full continuum of community-based care available to young people and their families.

Mobile Response and Stabilization Services as described in the bill is an upstream intervention that is primarily used to divert youth from the higher intensity of services such as inpatient and residential care. This is a good place to start as the services involves the whole family, is accessible around the clock, and avoids police involvement.

Maryland must do better when ensuring access to care for our children. We urge a favorable report on House Bill 1140.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.