



Maryland Community Health System

Committee:	Senate Finance Committee
Bill Number:	Senate Bill 984 - Public Health – State Designated Exchange – Health Data Utility
Hearing Date:	March 22, 2022
Position:	Favorable with Amendment

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *Senate Bill 984 – Public Health – State Designated Exchange – Health Data Utility*. The bill codifies the state designated health information’s role in collecting and providing health information to public health officials. This “public utility role” supports our public health agencies’ efforts to address crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill also provides for pharmacies to provide prescription drug dispensing information to the state-designated health information exchange, who may in turn provide data to health care organizations to help them in improving their health system’s utilization of certain prescription drugs.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers with a focus on providing somatic, behavioral, and dental services to underserved communities. We have a close partnership with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for People (CRISP), which is the state’s designated health information exchange. With data from CRISP, we have been able to make significant improvements in our care coordination efforts, leading to improvements in health outcomes for our patients.

We support the legislation because it furthers the ability of health care providers and public health officials to use CRISP’s data to make meaningful improvements to our health carer systems. We have been working with CRISP on amendments that would clarify that they would not use prescription drug data in education of individual practitioners, rather health centers and systems could use the data to evaluate best practices and make systemic changes themselves. We also support amendments to establish a consumer advisory committee, as it is critical to incorporate input of consumers, such as survivors of domestic violence, into privacy protections. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.