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2022 SESSION
Written Testimony

BILL NO: SB0350
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Letter of Information
TITLE: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Community Violence Prevention Services

BILL ANALYSIS:

SB0350 will broaden statewide community violence prevention services to support victims of violence. The proposed bill requires that the Maryland Medical Assistance Program establish a certifying body for violence prevention professionals. Certified violence prevention professionals would be required to fulfill initial training hours and continued education hours in trauma-informed care and evidence-based strategies and advocacy practices on or prior to January 1, 2023.

POSITION RATIONALE:

The Anne Arundel County Department of Health agrees the establishment of a statewide accredited certification and recertification requirements for violence prevention professionals under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program would be beneficial if the following issues were addressed:

1. There are many challenges moving nonclinical services into a fee for service reimbursable rate. How will the State address these challenges?

2. Will the State develop or assign a credentialing body that can determine who can employ these specific positions for reimbursement and payment?

Outside of the questions around the funding and reimbursement piece, a certified body of professionals would significantly advance community violence interventions with positive local implications. This bill would join other states in applying Medicaid funding towards violence intervention professional certification and programming.

The bill's requirements would introduce evidence-based principles of trauma-informed care, crisis intervention and conflict mediation proven into the certification curriculum. They would also include peer support, counseling, and screening protocols that are highly successful in existing Anne Arundel County behavioral health programs. This bill is an opportunity for Public Health to address violence prevention through the use of evidence based strategies and solve multi-layer violence issues.

The Department of Health leads the Anne Arundel County Gun Violence Intervention Team, a coalition of municipal partners with members from over two dozen agencies. Driven by local data and best practice of proven gun violence intervention programs, the coalition is implementing strategies to prevent and reduce gun violence countywide. Through local tracking of non-fatal gun injuries, the coalition has identified that our county rate of 26.3 individuals per 100,000 residents matches the national rate. This indicates a critical need for local violence prevention professionals to support victims and interventions to deter future violence.

Sources

[Hospital-Based Intervention Can Save Lives. A Growing Movement Is Betting on Medicaid to Fund It](#), The Trace

[An Act Concerning the Availability of Community Violence Prevention Services Under Medicaid](#), Connecticut General Assembly.