

TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Annie Coble
Assistant Director, State Affairs

DATE: March 1, 2023

RE: SB648 ELECTRONIC HEALTH NETWORKS AND ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS - NURSING HOMES - RELEASE OF RECORDS

Johns Hopkins **supports SB648 Electronic Health Networks and Electronic Medical Records - Nursing Homes - Release of Records.** This bill authorizes a nursing home that uses an electronic health network to release patient medical records to a business associate of the nursing home. This authorization would greatly enhance interoperability of nursing homes data with key partners along the continuum of care.

Johns Hopkins Medicine has been under extreme pressure due to unrelenting high occupancy of patients. The Johns Hopkins Hospital routinely runs at an occupancy well into the 90th-percentile range. This causes downstream system impacts, such as extended wait times in the emergency department. One of the reasons for the high occupancy relates to the challenges in discharging patients to appropriate levels of care, such as nursing homes.

Creating more flexibility around the use of electronic health records for nursing homes may alleviate some operational difficulties experienced by nursing homes, which could impact their patient throughput and have an upstream benefit to hospitals. We understand the issue of high occupancy rates is very complex and cannot be solved with one simple change; however, we believe this bill is a step in the right direction for making long term change.

For these reasons and more, Johns Hopkins urges a **favorable** report on **SB648**.