



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 82

Title: Maryland Medical Assistance and Children's Health Insurance Programs - School-Based Behavioral Health Services - Reimbursement

Hearing Date: February 14, 2023

Position: Support with Amendment

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *House Bill 82 – Maryland Medical Assistance and Children’s Health Insurance Program – School-Based Health Services – Reimbursement*. The bill establishes a framework for the Maryland Department of Health to apply to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for approval to receive federal matching funds on reimbursable behavioral health services provided in Maryland public schools.

LCPCM supports the underlying goal of the legislation to increase resources for behavioral health in schools. Maryland students are in crisis. Between 2016 to 2020, health care providers reported a 36% increase the number of children between 3 and 17 years-old with anxiety or depression. ⁱ

LCPCM understands that there are implementation issues that would need to be addressed in this bill’s implementation. One of those issues is how each jurisdiction balances support for school-based and community-based providers. We need the networks of both types of providers to be robust. This goal is a challenge with the health professional shortages in Maryland. We are committed to being a partner in the discussions on implementation and supporting the Committee in considering any amendments that are proffered.

We wanted to note that the bill delineates specific provider types and does not include licensed clinical professional counselors. We suggest that instead of listing professions that the bill be amended to recognize:

“all health care practitioners who are authorized to provide behavioral health services under Maryland law and who meet state and federal requirements for participating in the Medicaid program”

We ask for a favorable report with our amendment. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2022kidscountdatabook-2022.pdf>