



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee
Bill Title: House Bill 1148 – Behavioral Health Care – Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland)
Hearing Date: February 28, 2023
Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) supports *House Bill 1148 – Behavioral Health Care – Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland)*. The bill provides for a robust package of behavioral health initiatives, including the establishment of a commission to develop a comprehensive, long-term strategy to improve behavioral health access.

The bill also provides for a 2-year extension of two provisions related to telehealth reimbursement for Medicaid and private plans: 1) reimbursement of audio-only services; and 2) reimbursement parity for telehealth services. In providing services to women, certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and other health care practitioners can use telehealth services to increase access to care. Some examples are:

- **Hypertension – Prenatal and Post-Partum:** Telehealth, including remote patient monitoring, is a strategy for addressing hypertension for women in both prenatal and postpartum care. It allows for more frequent monitoring and clinical intervention than regular in-person visits.ⁱ A recent peer-reviewed research study showed that remote patient monitoring reduced prenatal admissions and induced labor for women with gestational hypertension.ⁱⁱ
- **Lowering Pregnancy Stress:** The Mayo Clinic’s “OB Nest” program, which includes several uses of telehealth communication resulted in lower pregnancy stress and higher patient satisfaction.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **PrEP:** Telehealth is being used to increase access to PrEP.^{iv}

We need consistent and fair reimbursement rules in order to continue to implement telehealth innovation across the health care spectrum, including somatic, behavioral health, and dental. We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further assistance, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443

ⁱ Hoppe, Kara et al. Telehealth with remote blood pressure monitoring for postpartum hypertension: A prospective single-cohort feasibility study. *Pregnancy Hypertension*. [Volume 15](#), January 2019, Pages 171-176.

ⁱⁱ Lanssens, Dorien et al. The impact of a remote monitoring program on the prenatal follow-up of women with gestational hypertensive disorders. [Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology Volume 223](#), April 2018.

ⁱⁱⁱ Butler Tobah, Yvonne et al. Randomized comparison of a reduced-visit prenatal care model enhanced with remote monitoring. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. December 2019.

^{iv} Touger, R. & Wood, B.R. *Curr HIV/AIDS Rep* (2019) 16: 113. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11904-019-00430-z>.