

Government and Community Affairs

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair
Finance Committee

FROM: Jeanette Ortiz, Esq.
Deputy Director, Maryland Government Affairs

DATE: January 30, 2024

RE: SB221 Health Occupations Boards – Reciprocal Licensure and Certification

Johns Hopkins supports **SB221 Health Occupations Boards – Reciprocal Licensure and Certification**. This bill authorizes any health occupations board (that does not otherwise have statutory authority to do so) to adopt regulations establishing reciprocity for individuals who are licensed or certified in another State or jurisdiction that also offers similar reciprocity to individuals licensed or certified by the board. Applicants for reciprocity must meet specified standards.

Johns Hopkins Medicine receives more than 2.8 million patients and nearly 337,000 emergency room visits annually. Through Telemedicine we have served 500,000 patients and provided over 2 million telehealth visits, accounting for 13% of ambulatory visits at Johns Hopkins Medicine. With 50 care locations reaching 5 states, our clinicians are eager to reach their patients wherever they are to provide continual care in coordination with local care physicians.

We urge Maryland to pass this bill expanding the authority of any health occupations board to adopt regulations establishing reciprocity for clinicians who are licensed or certified in another State or jurisdiction with similar reciprocity.

As stated in the bill, 20 health occupations boards share responsibility for regulating various health professions in Maryland. Johns Hopkins Telemedicine utilizes most of the health occupations housed under the Maryland Department of Health to provide direct patient care via telemedicine. These health occupations include, but are not limited to:

- Acupuncture Audiologists
- Hearing Aid Dispensers
- Speech-Language Pathologists, and Music Therapists
- Chiropractic
- Dental Dietetic Practice
- Environmental Health Specialists,
- Long-Term Care Administrators (formerly Nursing Home Administrators)
- Massage Therapy
- Morticians and Funeral Directors
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry

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- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy Physicians
- Podiatry Professional Counselors and Therapists
- Psychologists
- Residential Child Care Program Professionals
- Social Work

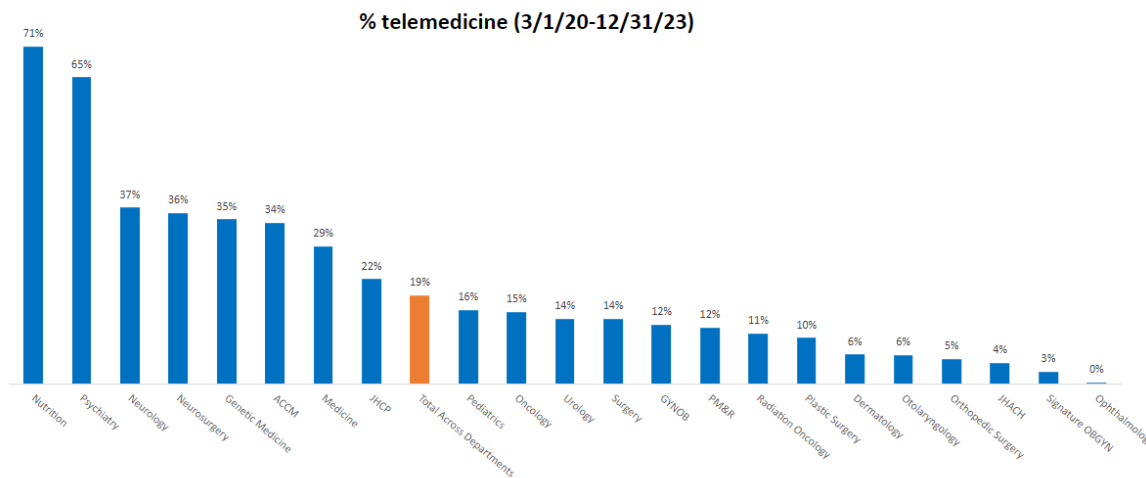
As some of these roles (Physicians, Morticians and Funeral Directors, Pharmacy, and Environmental Health Specialists) already have boards with existing statutory authority to issue a license by reciprocity, granting this authority to all 20 boards would support standardization, allow for joint acceleration of legislative change, and thereby increase telemedicine access to our patients.

Granting this authority to the health occupation boards would also allow for expedited participation in interstate health occupation compacts as they develop. Currently these compacts include PsyPact, Nurse Licensure Compacts, EMS Personnel Interstate Compact, and Counseling Compact, with several more on the horizon, including Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact, and Social Work Interstate Licensure Compact.

Telemedicine Across Specialties



- Care remains distributed across multiple primary care and subspecialty verticals



* Note: Excludes "telemedicine insensitive" visits, such as lab, radiology.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins Telemedicine respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB221.