



2024 SESSION
POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 403

COMMITTEE: Finance Committee

POSITION: Support

TITLE: Hospitals and Related Institutions - Residential Treatment Centers - Accreditation

BILL ANALYSIS

SB 403 - Hospitals and Related Institutions - Residential Treatment Centers - Accreditation adds to the definition of “accredited residential treatment center” to include a center accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) or the Council on Accreditation (COA), in addition to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations under current law.

POSITION AND RATIONALE

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) supports *SB 403*. This bill by recognizing CARF accreditation in the definition of “accredited residential treatment centers” would align with our state health plan regulations as well as with federal requirements and other states requirements for licensure of residential treatment centers.

More residential treatment centers are needed in Maryland. It is our understanding that a major reason why behavioral health providers are not seeking to become a residential treatment center is because of the accreditation requirement. Many behavioral health providers have CARF accreditation and the current requirement for licensure only recognizes accreditation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

For many having to seek accreditation from a second accreditation organization was a major issue preventing them from pursuing opening a residential treatment center. Late last year, MHCC approved a new residential treatment center. MHCC staff compared the CARF accreditation requirements to the JCAHO accreditation requirements as part of the review and found that both accreditation organizations standards are comparable. Requiring multiple accreditations, for organizations already holding CARF accreditation, is a barrier for many entities to pursue becoming a residential treatment center and offers little additional benefit to patients.

Expanding the State’s accreditation options to include CARF, in addition to JCAHO accreditation, will make the decision to establish a residential treatment center less costly to entities.

For these reasons the Maryland Health Care Commission asks for a favorable report on *SB 403*.

