



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 2140

RE: House Bill 1396 – Maryland Department of Health - Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Levels of Care - Study - Letter of Information

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee members,

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of information regarding House Bill (HB) 1396– Maryland Department of Health—Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Levels of Care—Study.

HB 1396, as amended, requires the Department to conduct a study to examine the linkages between different levels of care within the substance use disorder treatment and recovery continuum of care and provide recommendations on improving the current discharge and linkage requirements and the process for enforcing them. Additionally, the Department is required to submit a report by December 1, 2024.

Under HB 1396, as amended, the Department must conduct a study within six (6) months of the effective date of the bill to review the linkages between different levels of care in substance use disorder treatment and recovery. However, this timeframe will not be sufficient to ensure high-quality outcomes. The Department recommends conducting the study over a minimum period of 12 months to develop qualitative findings and recommendations on improving and enforcing existing discharge and linkage requirements.

The Department is currently responsible for overseeing the provision of treatment and recovery services for substance use disorders, including licensing and monitoring community-based outpatient and residential treatment providers across various levels of care. As part of this responsibility, the Department utilizes a number of tools, including accreditation-based programs, the Maryland Certification of Recovery Residences, and the American Society of Addictions Medicine standards of care, to evaluate the quality of care and ensure compliance monitoring and regulatory oversight.

Additionally, the study will examine linkages from high-intensity outpatient treatment programs to comprehensive services such as additional treatment and housing in relation to the discharge planning requirements in accreditation standards, statutes, and regulations. The study also

requires examining linkages from high-intensity outpatient treatment programs to other social service supports. However, this term may be unclear, and the Department suggests removing it from the legislation. Instead, the Department suggests utilizing the term care coordination for clarity and effectiveness.

The Department does not have the capacity to conduct the study required under HB 1396 with existing staffing. We estimate the fiscal impacts of the requirements to oversee the study, provide recommendations, and develop and submit the report at \$161,138.

If you have any further questions, please contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary