



MMCOA
Board of Directors

House Bill 1423 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Step Therapy, Fail-First Protocols, and Prior Authorization - Prescription Drugs to Treat Serious Mental Illness

Letter of Information

House Health and Government Operations Committee
January 29, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of information for House Bill 1423 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Step Therapy, Fail-First Protocols, and Prior Authorization - Prescription Drugs to Treat Serious Mental Illness.

The Maryland Managed Care Organization Association (MMCOA), which is comprised of all nine MCOs that serve Medicaid, is committed to ensuring access to the prescription drugs and therapies that our members depend on for their health and wellbeing.

Importantly, a majority of the drugs prescribed for the conditions referenced in House Bill 1423 are not currently covered by the MCOs. These drugs are carved out of the HealthChoice program and the Medicaid enrollees that are seeking care for Serious Mental Illness (SMI) receive these drugs via Fee-For-Service through the Behavioral Health ASO.

Utilization management of prescription drugs is an important aspect of any Medicaid program. These tools help determine the therapeutic appropriateness of a drug, monitor for over utilization, possible therapeutic duplications, drug contradictions and interactions, and appropriate dosing.

Given the unique needs of Medicaid members seeking treatment for SMI it would be worthwhile to consider including these issues in House Bill 1048. Among other things, House Bill 1048 tasks the Commission on Behavioral Health Access and Treatment to make recommendations regarding the financing structure and quality oversight necessary to integrate somatic and behavioral health services in Medicaid in coordination with the council.

Thank you for considering this letter of information and please do not hesitate to reach out to MMCOA should you have any questions.

Please contact Joe Winn, Executive Director of MMCOA, with any questions regarding this testimony at jwinn@marylandmco.org.

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