



HB400- Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits - Coverage and Reimbursement

Committee: Health and Government Operations Committee

Date: February 2, 2024

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Coalition of Families: Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides family peer support services at no cost to families who have a loved one with a mental health, substance use, or problem gambling disorder. Using their personal experience as parents, caregivers and other loved ones, our staff provide emotional support, resource connection and systems navigation as well as support groups and educational trainings and workshops.

Many of the families that our staff support has a loved one with a behavioral health need. MCF supports this bill for several reasons.

- An annual mental wellness checkup is preventative and needs to be normalized. Early detection and intervention of any behavioral health condition is key to helping to improve an individual's overall quality of life. Resources, support, and coordination of care can be discussed and provided during these visits. As well as educating the individual on the importance of mental health, self-care, and wellness overall.
- These annual mental wellness exams can be cost effective by reducing the risk of inpatient hospitalization and further intensive treatment for some individuals with early detection and intervention.
- Physical health and mental health are interconnected. Making an annual mental health wellness exam available through the entities listed is a start to de stigmatizing and normalizing mental health wellness as an annual exam.



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