



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 1301- Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Health Insurance – Transfers to Special Pediatric Hospitals – Prior Authorizations

Position: *Support*

March 10, 2025

House Health & Government Operations Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 1301. This bill would eliminate prior authorization requirements for transfers to special pediatric hospitals that provide non-acute medical, rehabilitation, therapy, and palliative services. Removing administrative barriers to facilitate the transition of patients from acute care hospitals to specialty hospitals is critical for ensuring that these children receive care that meets their needs.

Complementary legislation introduced this session ([House Bill 962](#)– Public Health - Pediatric Hospital Overstay Patients) would address the problem of children and youth boarding in hospitals after they are medically cleared for discharge. As of Feb. 14, 59 children across Maryland were stuck in hospitals, with nearly 29% of them in emergency departments. About 73% of these youth were between the ages of 6 to 17, and 63% of them were waiting to transition to lower levels of care.

While there are many reasons behind pediatric hospital overstays, delays because of prior authorization approvals add to the challenge. A delay of even a day or two can lead to unnecessary prolonged suffering for young patients. The unavailability of these beds while the patient is waiting to be transferred further prevents other children from receiving timely care.

Hospitals and health care providers should be able to focus on delivering high-quality care rather than navigating cumbersome approval procedures that serve as a barrier to treatment. Eliminating these requirements will improve patient outcomes and experience—ensuring the right care in the right setting, reducing the administrative burden on providers, and improving throughput at Maryland hospitals.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 1301.

For more information, please contact:
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