



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

March 10, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: Senate Bill 870– Maryland Department of Health - Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Beds – Capacity in Prince George’s and Report - Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for senate bill (SB) 870– Maryland Department of Health - Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Beds - Capacity in Prince George’s County and Report.

SB 870 requires the Department to work in coordination with the Prince George’s County Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) to establish ongoing operations of at least 24 adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds through prescribed methods. Specifically, the Department and the County LBHA would be required to expand capacity at an existing inpatient facility, contract with a private or nonprofit operator, or establish a public-private partnership to finance and operate adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds. Further, this legislation requires the Department to prioritize solutions that reduce pediatric psychiatric emergency department boarding and inpatient overstays, that boarding and overstay data be reflected through the State’s Psychiatric Bed Registry and Referral System, and that equitable access is provided regardless of payor source. If SB 870’s requirements cannot be met within the prescribed deadline of June 30, 2027, the Department is required to issue a request for proposals to establish the adolescent psychiatric inpatient beds. This legislation further provides for the administration of grant funds for specified purposes.

The Department is sensitive to the mental health needs of all individuals throughout the State and prioritizes the placement of both resources and services to help ensure a targeted and holistic approach is provided to match treatments with patients’ specific needs. To ensure the correct type of services are provided to adolescents within Prince George’s County, the Department would like to partner with an organization such as the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), to conduct a specific study to outline the type of resources, staffing, treatment plans, and therapeutic environments that the children would need to help ensure the best possible outcome and recovery.

The Department would also like to note that the construction or renovation of a facility to provide these beds would require extensive funding, planning, and time. To begin a construction project to this level, multiple procurements, consultants and studies would be needed to determine patient services, the location for a facility, the design to maximize patient recovery, and the specific service lines that the facility would serve. Projects to this magnitude require Capital funding submissions through the Department of Budget and Management, and would require inclusion in the Maryland Capital Improvement Plan for approval by the General Assembly. To help provide the correct type of critical and sustainable healthcare services to the right populations, the Department is respectfully requesting that a study be conducted to ensure Marylanders receive access to the quality of care that they need and deserve.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Lynch, Director of Governmental Affairs at [Meghan.Lynch@maryland.gov](mailto:Meghan.Lynch@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D  
Secretary of Health