



February 6th 2026

Maryland House of Representatives
Health Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) Chesapeake Chapter, we respectfully submit this letter in strong support of House Bill 71, Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program Services – Reimbursement (Youth Psychiatric Rehabilitation Parity Act of 2026), sponsored by Delegate Sample-Hughes.

The Maryland Chesapeake Chapter of NAPNAP represents pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses who provide comprehensive primary and mental health care to infants, children, adolescents, and young adults across Maryland. Our members work closely with youth and families affected by mental health conditions and routinely witness the critical role that psychiatric rehabilitation services play in stabilizing symptoms, promoting functional recovery, and preventing costly emergency department visits and inpatient hospitalizations.

HB 71 addresses a significant gap in access to medically necessary psychiatric rehabilitation services for youth enrolled in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program. By requiring reimbursement for a minimum of six and a maximum of thirty community psychiatric support services per month for eligible individuals, this bill ensures that service intensity is driven by clinical need rather than arbitrary reimbursement limits. Youth with serious emotional and behavioral health conditions often require consistent, community-based psychiatric rehabilitation to successfully engage in school, family life, and their communities.

Adequate reimbursement for psychiatric rehabilitation services supports continuity of care, improves treatment adherence, and strengthens the mental health workforce serving Maryland’s most vulnerable youth. From a pediatric provider perspective, this policy change aligns with evidence-based, trauma-informed, and developmentally appropriate mental health care practices. It also reflects a preventive approach that can reduce long-term healthcare costs by addressing mental health needs early and effectively.

The Maryland Chesapeake Chapter of NAPNAP strongly supports HB 71 and urges the Committee to issue a favorable report. Ensuring parity in psychiatric rehabilitation reimbursement is an essential step toward improving mental health outcomes for Maryland’s children and adolescents. The pediatric advanced practice nurses of your state are grateful to you for your attention to these crucial issues. The Chesapeake Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners membership includes over 200 primary and acute care pediatric nurse practitioners who are committed to improving the health and advocating for Maryland’s pediatric patients. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Chesapeake Chapter legislative committee or president, Dr. JD Murphy at mdchesnapnapeleg@outlook.com.

Sincerely,

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