



**House Appropriations Committee
February 25, 2021**

**House Bill 1123
Local Health Departments – Funding
Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 1123. No one can dispute the critical role Maryland's local health departments (LHDs) have played in our communities this last year. They have always provided essential services, yet they remain chronically underfunded. This bill proposes to ensure that they get a badly needed boost in funding for IT upgrades and better core staffing.

In normal times, LHDs provide critical chronic disease prevention and other services that meet the needs of their local communities. These services include:

- Addiction screening and treatment
- Mental health
- Medical transportation
- Dental assistance
- Cancer screenings
- Naloxone training
- Rabies clinics
- Tobacco cessation
- Sexually transmitted infection testing
- Health education activities
- Emergency preparedness
- Access to birth certificates, food permits and health insurance
- Immunizations
- Blood pressure checks
- WIC Services

These cost-effective interventions and services can have a significant impact on savings in other parts of the health care system. For example, a study by the University of Maryland School of Public Health from December of 2017 suggested that low-cost mental health programs provided by local health departments can play a critical role in preventing costly and unnecessary hospitalizations.

This pandemic has highlighted the need for a functional public health infrastructure. **We urge you to pass House Bill 1123.**

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.