



Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Bill Number: Senate Bill 161
Title: Task Force to Study Access to Mental Health Care in Higher Education
Hearing Date: January 20, 2021
Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 161 – Task Force to Study Access to Mental Health Care in Higher Education*. This bill would establish a task force to study access to mental health care in higher education.

LCPCM supports efforts to study access to mental health care in higher education settings, particularly for older adolescents and young adults. Data from Johns Hopkins shows that young adults are particularly at risk as the average age at onset for major depression is the mid-20s, panic disorders generally develop in late adolescents to early adulthood, and suicide is one of the leading causes of death in adolescents and adults ages 15 to 24ⁱ.

With so many young adults being diagnosed with a mental health condition for the first time while attending an institution of higher education, it makes sense to study how to increase awareness and access to care when students first begin experiencing symptoms. In addition, colleges and universities should consider ways to ensure that students living on campus in congregate housing can access their mental health provider, possibly by establishing confidential spaces for the use of telehealth.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael Faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or 410-693-4000.

ⁱ Mental Health Disorder Statistics. Johns Hopkins Medicine, Health Library.
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/mental-health-disorder-statistics>