

HB 1327- Education - Home and Hospital Teaching Pr

Uploaded by: Erin Dorrien

Position: FAV



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 29, 2022

To: The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chair, Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 1327 - Education - Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students - Report

Dear Chair Pinsky:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 1327, which seeks to study the Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students that ensures youth who are unable to attend school due to a physical or emotional condition can continue to receive an education.

Maryland hospitals care for everyone who comes through their doors, but too often patients are unable to access the level of care needed to transition back into the community. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, our hospitals began to study the myriad reasons a patient may face difficulties transitioning from the hospital. In 2019 hospitals participated in two studies of discharge delays among behavioral health patients in both inpatient settings and emergency departments. These studies found:

- During the 90-day study of behavioral health inpatients, 3% of patients experienced a discharge delay ¹
- During the 45-day study of emergency departments, 42% of behavioral health patients experienced a delay ²

In both studies, children and adolescents were identified as at risk for a delay, especially children with involvement in one or more state agencies. Foster youth, especially children and teens with complex medical needs, face many barriers to appropriate care.

In the fall, hospitals joined the state Department of Health to better define the reasons behind discharge difficulties in this population. Hospitals reported the number of youths in an "overstay," defined as being in the emergency department for longer than 48 hours or in an inpatient unit beyond medical necessity. Over an eight-week span, an average of 39 hospitals reported weekly, with an average of 16 hospitals reporting at least one child meeting overstay

¹ www.mhaonline.org/docs/default-source/resources/mha-report-jan-2019.pdf

² www.mhaonline.org/docs/default-source/resources/behavioral-health/behavioral-health-patient-delays-in-emergency-departments-study-2019.pdf



Maryland
Hospital Association

criteria. On average, there were 25 youth meeting overstay criteria in the emergency department and 25 youth meeting overstay criteria in inpatient units each week.

During this study, hospital staff were able to provide additional context to understand the reason behind a discharge delay. While capacity issues were most cited for the delay, hospital staff identified a state agency process as a primary or secondary cause of delays for the majority of the overstays. These include:

- Unable to place in a group home
- No foster care placement identified
- No available therapeutic foster care placement
- Parents abandoned patient or passed away
- Guardian wants to relinquish rights
- Waiting on interstate compact approval

The lives of these children and youth are often disrupted during their hospital stays, which means they are not always able to access appropriate education. Maryland hospitals support a comprehensive study of the Home and Hospital Teaching Program to ensure these children and youth are supported during their hospital stay and while they transition back to home, to the next level of care, to a permanent placement, and/or traditional educational settings.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on HB 1327.

For more information, please contact:
Erin Dorrien, Vice President, Policy
Edorrien@mhaonline.org

HB1327 Senate Testimony.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Harry Bhandari

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 29, 2022

**Testimony in support of HB 1327
Education – Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students – Report**

Chair Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to present **House Bill 1327** to study the Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students. This bill would create a group to study the Home and Hospital Teaching Program here in Maryland and determine if enough is being done to reintegrate students back into traditional schools.

The Home and Hospital Program is an educational service for students who have medical, physical, and/or disciplinary challenges. When students are experiencing physical or emotional conditions that make it impossible for them to attend school, this program lets them continue their education. However, the program must be improved. As it exists now, it does not prepare students for reintegration into a classroom learning environment, especially in the cases presented by students whose behavioral or emotional condition makes it difficult for them to attend school. These students remain out of school for excessive periods of time, and often when they do return to a classroom, the school is not prepared with an adequate re-entry plan. This is not just traumatic for the students but traumatic for everyone around them.

The goals of this bill which passed the House in 2019 unanimously, are 5 fold: (1) to require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to assess whether students in Home and Hospital Teaching program are receiving adequate support and instructional time to successfully transition back to the classroom; (2) MSDE would also analyze whether local school systems have sufficient staffing to coordinate instructional services for students; (3) study whether transition plans for students returning to the classroom should be implemented and, if so, the viability of having school counselors lead and develop those plans; (4) assess whether any transition plans should be reviewed or evaluated by a licensed medical professional prior to implementation; and (5) make recommendations regarding any statutory or regulatory changes to the Home and Hospital Teaching Program for Students.

On and off during the last two years, students have been learning away from the classroom. I think it is fair to say that there are some things we have learned regarding education outside of a classroom setting that can be used to bolster the Home and Hospital Program. We need to see

exactly where the program struggles so that we may address those difficulties as efficiently and mindfully as possible in the future.

In light of all this, I request a favorable report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Bhandari", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honorable Delegate Harry Bhandari
Maryland Legislative District 8