



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Delegate Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Senate Bill 1071 – Hospitals - Opioid Overdose - Medication-Assisted Treatment – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for SB 1071 - Hospitals - Opioid Overdose - Medication-Assisted Treatment.

This bill requires hospitals to establish and maintain protocols and capacity to treat patients for opioid-related overdose and connect patients that are administered or prescribed Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to an appropriate provider to continue treatment. Additionally, SB 1071 requires the Department to study whether and how funding for the Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF) can be used to provide training and resources for hospitals and requires the department to submit a report for recommendations by January 1, 2025.

There are many studies showing hospital-based clinicians lack knowledge and comfort treating substance use disorder. The Department currently coordinates with the Maryland Hospital¹²³⁴ Administration and the Mosaic Group to build the capacity of hospitals in Maryland to better respond to patients that present with high-risk substance use through the integration of universal screening, the employment of teams of peer recovery coaches to help with linkage to care and the introduction of MAT initiation. Over the last two years, the Department funded Mosaic Group to re-engage with twenty-one (21) hospitals to help them enhance their programming and start this work with the remaining hospitals that implemented the Reverse the Cycle program previously.

¹ Jakubowski A, Singh-Tan S, Torres-Lockhart K, Nahvi S, Stein M, Fox AD, Lu T. Hospital-based clinicians lack knowledge and comfort in initiating medications for opioid use disorder: opportunities for training innovation. *Addict Sci Clin Pract.* 2023 May 18;18(1):31. doi: 10.1186/s13722-023-00386-x. PMID: 37198707; PMCID: PMC10193697.

² O'Rourke BP, Hogan TH, Teater J, Fried M, Williams M, Miller A, Clark AD, Huynh P, Kauffman E, Hefner JL. Initiation of medication for opioid use disorder across a health system: A retrospective analysis of patient characteristics and inpatient outcomes. *Drug Alcohol Depend Rep.* 2022 Nov 12;5:100114. doi: 10.1016/j.dadr.2022.100114. PMID: 36844164; PMCID: PMC9948916.

³ Stewart MT, Coulibaly N, Schwartz D, Dey J, Thomas CP. Emergency department-based efforts to offer medication treatment for opioid use disorder: What can we learn from current approaches? *J Subst Abuse Treat.* 2021 Oct;129:108479. doi: 10.1016/j.jsat.2021.108479. Epub 2021 May 15. PMID: 34080563; PMCID: PMC8380665.

⁴ Cindy Parks Thomas, Maureen T. Stewart, Cynthia Tschampl, Kumba Sennaar, Daniel Schwartz, Judith Dey, Emergency department interventions for opioid use disorder: A synthesis of emerging models, *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, Volume 141, 2022, 108837, ISSN 0740-5472, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2022.108837>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0740547222001192>)

The Department appreciated working with the sponsor and Committees on the current amendments. However, the Department suggests deleting the amendments that require the Department to conduct a study and provide a report to the General Assembly related to ORF funding for the SB1071 activities. Due to the critical nature of the work that the ORF makes possible and the importance of ensuring that funds are spent in accordance with the settlement agreements that make the ORF possible, the Department has already worked to develop a process for funding allocation. Moreover, we understand that hospitals may already have other, alternative sources of funding for these activities, making an allocation from the ORF unnecessary.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

Amendments to Senate Bill 1071 as Amended

Amendment No. 1

On page 7 strike in its entirety line 23 through line 29 inclusive.