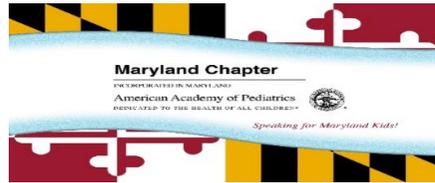




The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone

DATE: February 16, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 578 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Programs – Prior Authorization for Drug Products to Treat an Opioid Use Disorder – Prohibition*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 578.

House Bill 578 prohibits the Medical Assistance Program from requiring prior authorization for a prescription drug that is used to treat an opioid use disorder that contains methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone. The escalating incidence of opioid use disorders and overdoses continues to be the focus of significant policy considerations. Over the last several Sessions, a number of initiatives have been enacted with the objective of lowering incidence, saving lives, and effectively providing access to services.

Effectively providing treatment for opioid disorder often requires immediate provision of services, including essential drug products. Imposing administrative hurdles, such as prior authorization, often delay the provision of required services. Prior authorization for drugs that treat opioid use disorders, not only prevents the timely administration of life-saving medications but could result in a patient overdosing between visits while waiting for approval and/or failing to return to receive the medication once approved, thereby not receiving necessary treatments.

House Bill 578 only applies to prescription drugs that are solely used to treat opioid use disorders and therefore there is no basis for requiring prior authorization. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000