



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 1, 2024

To: The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair, House Health & Government Operations Committee

Re: Letter of Information - House Bill 1155 - Hospitals - Opioid Overdose - Medication-Assisted Treatment

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 1155. Maryland continues to cope with an opioid crisis, and our hospitals are on its front lines.

While we appreciate the intent behind HB 1155, in general, we do not believe clinical practice should be legislated. Science often moves faster than the legislative process. Given that advances happen regularly, codifying these practices may harm hospitals' ability to offer evidence-based standards of care.

Current evidence indicates that offering buprenorphine in emergency departments reduces morbidity and mortality.¹ Thus, procedures to start medication-assisted treatment (MAT) at emergency departments for individuals who suffered an overdose have already been widely adopted. We ask the Committee to ensure flexibility so that hospitals can quickly pivot as standards of care evolve.

We hope that you find this information useful as you deliberate this legislation.

For more information, please contact:
Jake Whitaker, Director, Government Affairs
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¹ "Evidence-Based Resource Guide Series: Use of Medication-Assisted Treatment in Emergency Departments." Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/pep21-pl-guide-5.pdf.