

Maryland General Assembly Hospital Throughput Work Group Meeting Summary

Sept. 14, 2023

Outcome

MHA convened the third General Assembly Hospital Throughput Work Group meeting where research and analysis on emergency department patient demographics was shared to provide further insights into equitable hospital throughput improvement.

Main Points of Discussion

- Members were presented with hospital claims data on patient demographics such as age, race, gender and insurance status. Additional analyses are being considered to determine relative ED wait times based on age, race, and gender and length of stay, in addition to capacity.
- Members noted that African American Marylanders are overrepresented in EDs compared to all other populations.
- Equitable solutions should consider the unique needs and challenges faced by urban and rural populations.
- The Work Group should consult individuals with different perspectives and lived experience, to better serve underrepresented groups and avoid unintended consequences.
- Members surmise that Maryland needs more hospital beds but cautioned that hospital beds need to be professionally staffed and designed for the appropriate levels of care to meet demand.
- The Work Group should review and make recommendations to improve the systems and process for discharging patients from EDs.
- The Work Group should assess factors driving admissions/hospitalization and limiting discharge and post-acute care options.
- Members discussed whether there are additional options for Medicare to fund post-acute care.
- Members discussed whether lack of access to primary care is due to a lack of resources or insurance coverage.
- Reducing the uninsured rate, including for undocumented Marylanders, will help reduce avoidable ED admissions.
- Members discussed how this Work Group could build on the work performed by other groups looking at issues like the healthcare workforce and behavioral health.
- Members discussed whether there are alternative discharge options like a “discharge lounge” when ED space is needed, but other post-acute care options are limited.
- Any recommendations submitted by this Work Group should include tangible next steps, the stakeholder(s) responsible, and the date by which they should be completed.

Next Steps

- The Work Group will meet again on Oct. 18 to review Maryland’s unique hospital payment model, individual Work Group member recommendations, and the work performed by parallel work groups.
- All Work Group presentations and materials, including a link to the General Assembly Throughput Work Group’s page, are on the MHA [website](#).