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House Bill 1051 Public Health - Patient Access to Medication

Health Committee

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Position: FAVORABLE

Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization that brings together consumers, families, clinicians, advocates and concerned citizens for unified action in all aspects of mental health and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as behavioral health). We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of House Bill 1051.

HB 1051 requires the establishment of a program intended to reduce hospital admissions by using a licensed pharmacist to deliver discharge medications to patients before they leave the hospital. It also authorizes health care facilities to use automated and remote drug dispensing systems.

Taking prescription medications as directed by a physician is essential to achieving desired clinical outcomes, reducing health-related expenditures, and improving quality of life. Unfortunately, studies show that only 30% of patients consistently take their medications as prescribed. However, there are innovative technologies that simplify the medication management process and ensure patients receive the right medications in the right dosages at the right times.

Automated and remote drug dispensing systems improve health care by enhancing safety, increasing operational efficiency, and expanding access to care. They reduce human errors, such as incorrect dosages, while optimizing inventory tracking to prevent shortages. These systems allow for 24/7 medication access and allow patients in rural or underserved areas to access pharmacist consultations and medication without traveling long distances. By streamlining workflows and reducing manual labor, these systems cut costs and are scalable, allowing pharmacies to handle higher volumes of prescriptions as demand increases, particularly for aging populations

For these reasons, MHAMD supports HB 1051 and urges a favorable report.

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