



Maryland  
Hospital Association

**Senate Bill 1129 – Substance Use Disorder Treatment – Licensing of Outpatient Programs  
and Provision of Naloxone Kits**

**Position: *Oppose***

**Bill Summary**

SB 1129 would prohibit the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene from requiring, under specified circumstances, that an outpatient substance use disorder treatment program be granted specified accreditation as a condition of licensure; require each hospital emergency department to establish and implement a policy of providing a naloxone kit to patients admitted for an opioid overdose and training the patients in the proper method of administering the naloxone before the patient is released; etc.

**MHA Position**

Maryland's hospitals are committed to combating our state's growing opioid abuse crisis. From January to September of 2016, drug and alcohol-related deaths increased by 62 percent compared to the same period in 2015. Heroin deaths were up by 72 percent, and fentanyl deaths spiked 284 percent. These are troubling statistics, which is why a comprehensive, statewide approach is needed.

Hospitals agree that expanding access to life-saving Naloxone medication is beneficial, but while the intent of SB 1129 is sound, the legislation of clinical treatment protocols and physicians' decisions is not the right approach.

Rather, hospitals support a collaborative endeavor to address this problem. In March, hospital CEOs participated in a statewide conference call with Department of Health & Mental Hygiene officials to discuss how the administration of Naloxone to overdose patients and the provision of the drug for individual use to those at-risk of an overdose can help reduce overdose deaths. On March 29, hospitals will convene emergency department leaders from throughout the state to discuss how to expand the use of Naloxone and direct substance use disorder patients to appropriate treatment.

Tackling Maryland's opioid crisis will take a multidisciplinary approach and hospitals stand ready to do our part, but cannot support legislation that mandates clinical decisions, which must be made by qualified health care practitioners.

For these reasons, we urge you to give SB 1129 an *unfavorable* report.