



**Senate Bill 765: Maryland Medical Assistance Program –  
Clinical Services Provided by Certified Peer Recovery Specialists**

**Position: *Support***

**Bill Summary**

SB 765 would authorize the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide, as of January 1, 2020, and subject to certain limitations, clinical services provided by certified peer recovery specialists to individuals with substance use disorders or mental health disorders; and require the Secretary of Health, under certain circumstances, to develop certain regulations with input from certain entities.

**MHA Position**

Maryland's hospital's support efforts to expand access to appropriate, effective, community-based treatment for substance use and mental health disorders. This is a critical component of a comprehensive, collaborative solution to the state's ongoing behavioral health crisis and among the five key recommendations in MHA's [\*Roadmap to an Essential, Comprehensive System of Behavioral Health Care for Maryland\*](#).

The roadmap, developed by MHA's Behavioral Health Task Force (composed of hospital leaders and charged with identifying solutions to the crisis), includes a recommendation that investments be made in a highly-skilled workforce to proactively manage behavioral health conditions. Peer recovery specialists, who have experienced firsthand the difficulty in overcoming immense personal challenges, have been identified as a [promising means to overcome behavioral health disorders](#).

Because behavioral health disorders are not simple problems with a one-size-fits-all solution, it's essential that health care providers have every tool available to them to help those in need, including peer recovery specialists. The addition of this critical class of health care worker to the Maryland Medical Assistance Program will help patients get the care they need from the right professionals in the right setting.

For these reasons, we urge you to give SB 765 a *favorable* report.