



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor - Van Mitchell, Secretary

April 22, 2016

Dear Stakeholders:

Thank you for your comments and interest in our December 2015 draft proposal to rebundle the Medicaid reimbursement rate for methadone treatment. This proposal was developed to align our payment policy to clinical best practices that indicate methadone and counseling together result in better patient outcomes than treating patients with methadone alone. Specifically, studies show methadone with counseling results in less drug use, less criminal activity, and fewer risks related to infectious diseases. Federal requirements also require Opioid Treatment Programs to provide adequate substance abuse counseling to each patient as clinically necessary.

In February 2016, we posted public comments received on the December draft proposal and the Department's response to those comments on our website. Based on your input, we have posted an updated re-bundling proposal to the Behavioral Health Integration website which may be accessed here: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/bhd/Pages/Integration-Efforts.aspx>. As promised in December, the Department is opening another 21 day comment period on the revised proposal. Please direct your comments to dhmh.medic aidsud@maryland.gov by **May 13, 2016**.

As was the case in February, at the conclusion of the comment period, the Department will review, respond to and post comments received to the Behavioral Health Integration website by mid June. A provider alert will be sent by Beacon Health Options, the Department's ASO, when the Department's response to comments are posted. We will also disseminate our response to comments through the Behavioral Health Integration listserv, through the Medicaid Advisory Committee and the Local Health Officers. These comments will be considered as we determine next steps for promulgating regulations and seeking needed federal authorities for implementation.

Thank you for your engagement and feedback as we refine this proposal. For additional information, please refer to the Behavioral Health Integration website or direct any questions to dhmh.medic aidsud@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Shannon M. McMahon
Deputy Secretary, Health Care Financing