

# Advocacy

Maryland Jewish  
DAY RECEPTION 2024



## Removing the Financial Burden on Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits

One in five Marylanders suffer from a mental health condition, and only a fraction receive the help they need. As mental and behavioral health continue to be at the forefront of our state's focus, it is important that individuals can receive care. Currently, if an individual has a behavioral health assessment from a behavioral health provider and there is no mental illness diagnosis as a result of the appointment, the appointment will not be covered by insurance. Just as we are afforded an annual physical, we should also have access to an annual behavioral health assessment.

### **SB124/HB400 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits - Coverage and Reimbursement (Sen. Malcolm Augustine/Del. Jamila Woods)**

This bill would require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and health insurers to provide coverage for annual behavioral health wellness visits, regardless of whether a diagnosis is made at the end of the visit.

### **Why is this bill good for Maryland and the Jewish Community?**

The Jewish community historically takes communal responsibility for the vulnerable and underserved – this includes those in poverty; individuals with disabilities; victims of domestic violence, etc. Many of these individuals need readily accessible, high-quality mental and behavioral health services. By targeting early intervention in mental illness, we are removing the stigma around mental health diagnoses; saving money for patients; and providing access to needed care.