

Memo

To: Members, House Health Policy Committee
From: Adam Carlson, Vice President, Advocacy
Date: Nov. 3, 2021
Re: House Bills (HB's) 5488 and 5489
Position: Support

The Michigan Health and Hospital Association (MHA) supports HB 5488 and 5489, which would allow Michigan to join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT). This compact is a legal agreement among states that creates an expedited pathway to licensure for psychologists who wish to practice telepsychiatry across state lines. To date, 27 states have passed legislation to join PSYPACT.

The interstate compact is voluntary for both the state and physicians and does not supersede or change a state's medical practice law. Participating states retain the authority to issue licenses, investigate complaints, and discipline physicians practicing in their state. The compact is intended to apply to the delivery of psychological services through telecommunications technologies and only allows for temporary in-person telepsychology across state boundaries for 30 days in a calendar year.

As of September of 2019, more than four million Michiganders lived in a mental health provider shortage area. To put this into perspective, this means there were less than one mental health provider for every 20,000 to 30,000 residents in these areas. Expanding telepsychology would lead to shorter wait times and could have significant positive impacts for mental health patients in our state.

During the ongoing pandemic, providers continue to meet the needs of their patients through telehealth services with widely positive feedback. Enacting this legislation will further increase the availability of telehealth services for mental health patients and allow patients in rural and underserved communities to more easily access care. Understanding that the demand for telehealth services is expected to grow significantly in the coming years, the MHA believes joining PSYPACT is an important policy for both patients and providers in this state.

Please contact Adam Carlson (acarlson@mha.org) at the MHA if you have further questions regarding MHA's position on HB 5488 and 5489.

Brian Peters, Chief Executive Officer