



April 29, 2024

Honorable Rep. Marvin Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI, 02903

Re: Support, H7204-Relating to State Affairs and Government – The HealthCare Services Funding Plan Act

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Health Center Association, please accept this letter of support for House Bill 7204, which would fund the Maternal Psychiatry Resource Network (MomsPRN) and the Pediatric Psychiatry Resource Networks (PediPRN). Funding of these Psychiatric Networks would enhance access to mental health care in Rhode Island for children, pregnant women, and postpartum individuals.

Our state's health care system faces numerous challenges, including access to specialized psychiatric care for vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant women, and postpartum individuals. Rhode Island's eight Community Health Centers provide high-quality, comprehensive primary care services to over 200,000 individuals; 59% of patients are female, and 26% are under 18 years of age. Psychiatry Resource Networks programs have proven helpful by providing psychiatric telephone consultation services to health care providers serving these vulnerable populations. Enabling patients to receive care from their trusted clinicians supports the continuity of care, helps to improve patient outcomes, and can reduce emergency room visits.

A PRN account would provide vital funding for the continuation and expansion of Rhode Island's existing PediPRN and MomsPRN programs. By improving access to mental health services, we can ensure that all Rhode Islanders, regardless of age or gender, have access to care.

Sincerely,

M. Campbell

Melissa Campbell
Policy Manager

The Rhode Island Health Center Association members include:
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc. ~ Comprehensive Community Action Program
East Bay Community Action Program ~ Providence Community Health Centers
Thundermist Health Center ~ Tri-County Community Action Agency
WellOne Primary Medical & Dental Care ~ Wood River Health