

**PROVIDER ALERT**  
**Authorization for Admission to Inpatient IMDs**  
**of Adults 22-64 Years of Age**  
**May 4, 2021**

**Target Audience: All Behavioral Health Providers**

The State of Maryland does not have a waiver to permit Medicaid funding for individuals between the ages of 22 and 64 in a free-standing psychiatric hospital or Institution for Mental Disease (IMD), including Sheppard Pratt and Brook Lane Hospitals. Therefore, all adult psychiatric admissions to an IMD are paid 100% with state general funds. The State must therefore adhere to procedures that ensure claims do not exceed budgeted dollars. In addition, the Emergency Medical Treatment & Labor Act (EMTALA) places certain requirements on hospitals to provide individual stabilization services.

As a reminder of the [Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration's procedure](#) in place since 2015 regarding authorization for admission to an inpatient IMD for individuals ages 22 to 64:

- Before an Emergency Department (ED) in a general hospital with a psychiatric unit seeks authorization to transfer an individual for admission to an inpatient psychiatric IMD, the ED must attempt at minimum to place the individual in its psychiatric unit and psychiatric units in other general hospitals. **The ED seeking placement must obtain a total of five (5) denials** before contacting Optum Maryland for placement authorization (i.e., its psych unit plus 4 additional units).
- Before an acute hospital psychiatric unit or before an ED in a general hospital **without** a psychiatric unit seeks authorization to transfer an individual for admission to an inpatient psychiatric IMD, the facility must attempt and fail to transfer the individual to **four (4) other** psychiatric units in acute/general hospitals.

In the event that Maryland is granted the IMD waiver to cover this service under Medicaid, the policy will be revisited.

Please visit our website at [maryland.optum.com](http://maryland.optum.com) for provider resources, online training, and more information.

Thank you,  
Optum Maryland Team