

Governor Evers Signs WHA-Initiated Bipartisan Psychiatric Hospital Bill into Law

Bill addresses a 1960s-era prohibition on psychiatric hospitals receiving Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement

On March 22, Governor Tony Evers signed into law Assembly Bill 616, which was led by Rep. Karen Hurd (R-Fall Creek) and Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), enabling Wisconsin to seek a waiver to a 1960s-era federal Medicaid policy that prohibits psychiatric hospitals with more than 16 beds from participating in the traditional Medicaid fee-for-service program for adults.

"WHA thanks Governor Evers for signing Assembly Bill 616 into law today a bipartisan bill initiated by WHA that will help remove an outdated regulatory barrier impacting access to mental health care in Wisconsin," said WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding. "WHA looks forward to continuing important work with the governor and Legislature to address regulatory and payment policy complexities unique to mental health and substance use disorder services that make the sustainability of these services especially challenging in Wisconsin despite the great need for those services."



Gov. Tony Evers signed AB 616 into law on March 22, 2024, removing an outdated regulatory barrier impacting access to mental health care in Wisconsin. WHA's Matthew Stanford and representatives from WHA member hospitals, including Aurora Health Care and Summit Behavioral Health, joined the ceremony.

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