

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article - Health - General

Section 10-809(c)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1990 Replacement Volume)

Preamble

WHEREAS, The State psychiatric hospital centers operated by the Mental Hygiene Administration in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene discharge 6,000 patients per year on average and use an aftercare planning process that does not authoritatively link needed aftercare services to persons being discharged nor provide follow-up services to determine whether discharged persons are receiving the services needed to prevent homelessness; and

~~WHEREAS, According to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene statistics, of 644 discharges from Springfield Hospital Center from March to August 1989 to Baltimore City, 78 or 12% are at high risk for becoming homeless because:~~

~~(1) 27 persons were discharged to the Baltimore Department of Social Services Homeless Unit;~~

~~(2) 9 were discharged to an unknown living arrangement;~~

~~(3) 18 were discharged with no forwarding address; and~~

~~(4) 24 were discharged to miscellaneous living arrangements which include shelter and boarding houses; and~~

WHEREAS, The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has reported that 982 chronically mentally ill persons were homeless in 1989, and that these persons are subject to major health complications, assault, freezing temperatures, inappropriate incarceration, and exploitation; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that homelessness of mentally ill persons can be prevented by providing:

(1) careful aftercare planning;

(2) community services, especially housing and assistance in obtaining benefits; and

(3) regular follow along or case management services; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Human Resources has established the Shelter, Nutrition and Service for the Homeless Program in the Community Services Administration. However, the Mental Hygiene Administration in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has not established a program office to assume responsibility for the prevention of homelessness of mentally ill persons; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF