



## **Kathleen Birrane**

### ***2024 Distinguished Service Award***

Kathleen Birrane has served as Commissioner of the Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) since May 2020. In that time, Commissioner Birrane has made significant progress in efforts to ensure that privately insured Marylanders can access the mental health and substance use care they deserve. She has demonstrated a consumer-focused approach to the regulation of Maryland's private insurance market and a strong commitment to transparency and public input.

After passage of legislation in 2020 establishing new parity compliance reporting requirements for Maryland health care insurers, Commissioner Birrane and her team at the MIA worked diligently to establish a parity reporting framework that is one of the strongest in the country. It is a model for other states, as demonstrated by reference to the MIA framework in recent federal parity compliance materials. Maryland insurers are now currently required to submit detailed analyses of their health benefit plan non-qualitative treatment limitations (NQTLs) and provide data across multiple critical areas – including service denial rates, utilization review, formulary exceptions, provider credentialing, and reimbursement rates – allowing for comprehensive quantitative parity analyses. These reporting requirements are allowing for impactful parity enforcement at the highest level.

Commissioner Birrane has also been steadfast in her commitment to public engagement. Under her leadership, the MIA has hosted multiple sessions to educate Marylanders on how to access mental health and substance use care using their insurance. She and her staff have provided a wealth of valuable information, listened intently and empathetically to Marylanders' concerns, and worked to resolve key consumer issues.