HB 414  (Blackmon-146th)  Bill Link
Creates a grant program within the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to provide behavioral health services to military service members, veterans, and their families.
Status: PASSED HOUSE Assigned to Senate Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TUESDAY.

HB 416  (Silcox-53rd)  Bill Link
Allows for qualified pharmacy technicians to administer any COVID-19 vaccine and any vaccine on the adult immunization schedule to individuals 18 years of age or older. The supervising pharmacist will have discretion over delegating the authority to administer vaccines and must be readily available to the pharmacy technician when a vaccine is being administered.
Status: PASSED HOUSE Assigned to Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

HB 440  (Stoner-40th)  Bill Link
Authorizes public and private schools to stock a supply of undesignated ready-to-use glucagon and permits prescribers to provide such medication to schools. (Glucagon is a hormone that your pancreas makes to help regulate your blood glucose [sugar] levels.)
Status: PASSED HOUSE Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

HB 520  (Jones-25th)  Bill Link
Authorizes the Department of Community Health (DCH) to collaborate with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) to study the psychiatric treatment residential facilities referral processes with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and Department of Human Services (DHS). The bill prohibits health benefit plans from implementing step therapy protocol for medications prescribed to treat severe mental illness. DBHDD is authorized to work with certain other agencies to create guidance for standardized terminology such as the definition of serious mental illness. Definitions for homeless individuals, recidivism, and other terms may also be developed. DBHDD will also work with individuals to provide county-based coordinators to work with criminal justice and behavioral health providers to reduce jail admission of those in a mental health crisis that do not pose a public safety risk. A state-wide public-private partnership will be established by DBHDD to serve as a clearinghouse for best practices, information, and resources to support "familiar faces". These are individuals with serious mental illness that have frequent contact with criminal justice, homeless, and behavioral health systems. Subject to appropriations, DBHDD will develop a pilot program to assist jails in implementing behavioral health screening programs and protocols and create a grant program to create or expand jail in-reach and reentry programs which will focus on "familiar faces" and connect individuals with community resources. A comprehensive study on the public behavioral health workforce will be conducted by DBHDD to understand recruitment and retention issues, and target solutions to help with shortages. The bill adds certain members to the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission (BHRIC)BHIRC, with DBHDD, is required to develop a common definition of "serious mental illness" and include "familiar faces" to initiative coordination. BHIRC is tasked with creating a multi-year plan to expand the use of forensic peer mentors. BHIRC is required to establish a task force to build a continuum of care. The task force will comprehensively study access to inpatient behavioral health beds, and make recommendations on needed capacity building, youth specific care, and autism spectrum-related care. The task force will also formally review competency evaluation and restoration challenges, and forensic laws and regulations that affect those interacting with the behavioral health and criminal justice systems. This task force will study increased capacity of child and adolescent substance misuse intensive outpatient treatment programs. BHIRC will convene a task force to review the effect of behavioral health on homeless populations across the state. A physician's certificate or affidavit is required to be attached to a court order for involuntary treatment. (Personally identifying information will be removed from such document.)OHSC is required to study behavioral health provider licensing requirements to identify barriers to entry or licensure. Professional boards to be included in the study are Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists; State Board of Examiners of Psychologists; and the Georgia Board of Nursing. The study will update licensing application and renewal systems, create pathways for foreign-trained practitioners, and update practicum and supervision requirements. The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists is authorized to...