

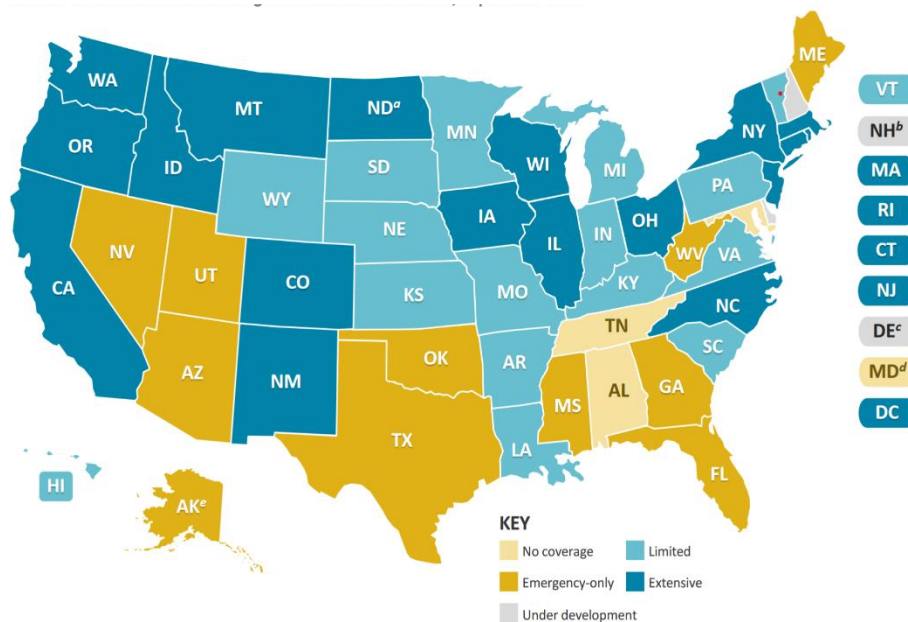
It's Time to Close the Gap. Dental Care is Health Care.

Support Adult Dental Coverage in Maryland Medicaid

Maryland is just one of three states without adult dental coverage in Medicaid

Maryland is behind almost every other state in dental coverage in Medicaid. Over thirty other states provide comprehensive or limited adult dental coverage in their programs. The remaining states provide some dental coverage to most adults in their programs in emergency situations – except for the three states of Maryland, Alabama, and Tennessee.

State Medicaid Coverage of Adult Dental Benefits. September 2019



Source: Center for Health Care Strategies https://www.chcs.org/media/Adult-Oral-Health-Fact-Sheet_091519.pdf

Maryland has pockets of adult coverage in Medicaid: dually eligible adults under the age of 65, pregnant and postpartum individuals, and young adults who have aged out of foster care. Managed care organizations may provide some basic benefits – but Maryland law does not require it, so that it could change at any time. This means that 800,000 adults are left without a reliable source of adult dental coverage that meets their needs for basic preventative and restorative services.

Dental coverage can transform the life of someone you know

One in four Marylandersⁱ is covered by Medicaid. We all know someone who is covered by Medicaid, and that person may be a friend, family member, or even ourselves. Dental care can transform lives. If someone suffers from poor oral health, they may face many struggles, including:

- managing dental pain;
- controlling a chronic disease;
- obtaining a job; or
- even eating.

Dental coverage can mean the difference between suffering and living a productive life for many Marylanders.

Dental coverage is not a Medicaid cost. It's an investment.

There is a reason that a majority of states provide dental coverage to adults in their Medicaid program. Health care cannot be delivered effectively without dental care. The lack of adult dental coverage drives up health care costs and contributes to health disparities, making it difficult to keep our communities healthy:

- People go to emergency rooms because they can't get preventative dental care. This costs \$10 million a year for Maryland Medicaid.ⁱⁱ
- Basic dental care can lower cost of managing chronic diseases, saving \$236 for each preventative dental visit.ⁱⁱⁱ

States can leverage federal investment of millions of dollars, and Maryland is leaving that investment on the table. Federal dollars pay for at least half of Medicaid.

What you can do to help

With 2022 legislation in the Maryland, we can make adult dental coverage in Medicaid a reality for Marylanders. Please join the Maryland Dental Action Coalition in pledging your support: <https://www.mdac.us/initiatives/medicaid-adult-dental-benefit/medicaid-adult-dental-benefits/>

DENTAL CARE IS HEALTH CARE FOR MARYLANDERS

"I am insured through Maryland Medicaid. I got dental coverage through a special waiver program in 2019. For the first time in 20 years, I have been able to see a dentist regularly. I now feel healthy and confident. But I am one of the lucky ones. Thousands of other adults in Medicaid are suffering and deserve coverage."

G. Graves
Medicaid Consumer
Washington County

After Deamonte Driver's death, Maryland has done a tremendous job at improving dental access for children. But our state has left behind parents, grandparents, and adult family members. Maryland is just one of three states without adult dental coverage in Maryland. This is unconscionable. The health of our state depends on the health of the entire family. We need to do better."

Dr. Jonelle
Anamelechi
Pediatric Dentist
Prince George's
County



The Maryland Dental Action Coalition and the following organizations and individuals support adult dental coverage in Maryland Medicaid:

ORGANIZATIONS

American Dental Hygienist Association
Baltimore City Substance Abuse Directorate
BH Health Services, Inc.
Clinical Management and Development Services
Hildas Place Behavioral Health Organization
Institute for Behavioral Resources, Inc.
James' Place, Inc.
Maryland Addictions Directors Council
Maryland Assembly for School Based Health Care
Mary's Center
National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of Maryland
Northern Parkway Treatment Service
Y of Central Maryland

INDIVIDUALS

Joy Auslander, RN
Lisa Bress, RDH
Suzanne Burgee, RDH
Deborah L. Cartee, UMDSD
Wenzell Carter, DDS
Paige Christensen
Grace Comello
Marion Currens, CRNP
Cailin Gollubier
Sophia Flynn
Harry Goodman, DDS
Chenelle Gould
Courtney Gregson, RDH BS
Jennie Hagar, RDH

Alex Hammond, MD PhD
Qian Harasta
Brittany Harris, RDH
Marleigh Korell
Ericka Lewis
Thomas Oates, DDS
Sonnie Price
Katherine Perez, RDH
Joan Sperlein
Patricia Stabile
Sheryl Syme
Phillip Teixeira
My Truong

ⁱ Extrapolated from September 2021 Medicaid enrollment figures presented at October 2021 Medicaid Advisory Committee meeting and 2020 Census <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/pop.html>

ⁱⁱ https://www.mdac.us/file_download/inline/2ed08573-f47a-47b4-a535-4bffd815823e

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/00220345211007448>