MDAC, CAREQUEST INSTITUTE RELEASE UPDATE TO 2017 ED STUDY
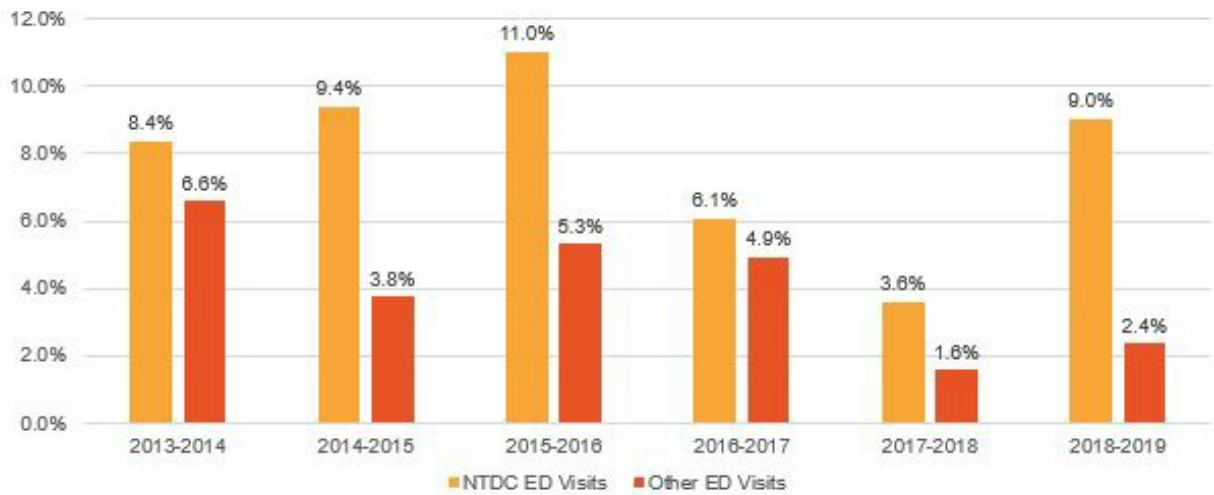### Findings reinforce need for an adult dental benefit in Medicaid

A report released today by MDAC and the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health (formerly the DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health) notes a significant opportunity to lower emergency department room visits and costs through improved access to oral health care.

The report updates findings from the 2017 DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health report on the *Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits by Adults for Dental Conditions in Maryland.* In FY2019, there were 35,300 emergency department (ED) visits for nontraumatic dental conditions (NTDCs) among all adults in Maryland. The number of ED visits for dental conditions declined 8% between FY2018 and FY2019. The average charges for these visits increased from $486 in FY2013 to $728 in FY2019, more than double the increase in ED visits for non-dental conditions. Medicaid paid for 54% of those visits, even though Medicaid participants only account for 17% of the adult population in Maryland.
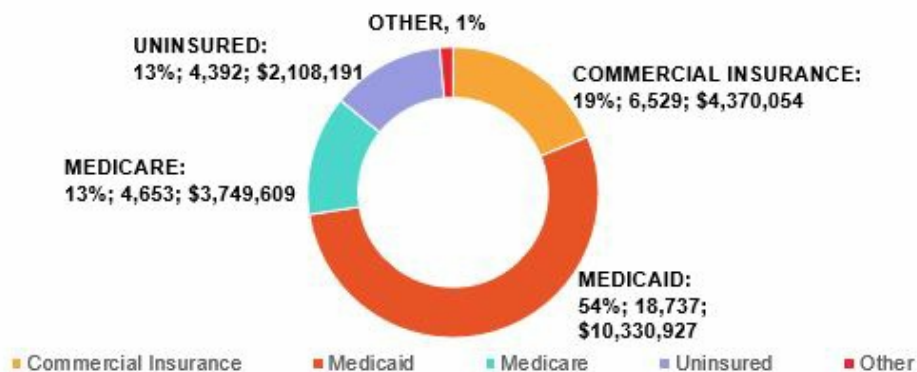
Trends in ED Visits for NTDC in Maryland

Count — Rate

CareQuest
Institute for Oral Health.

36

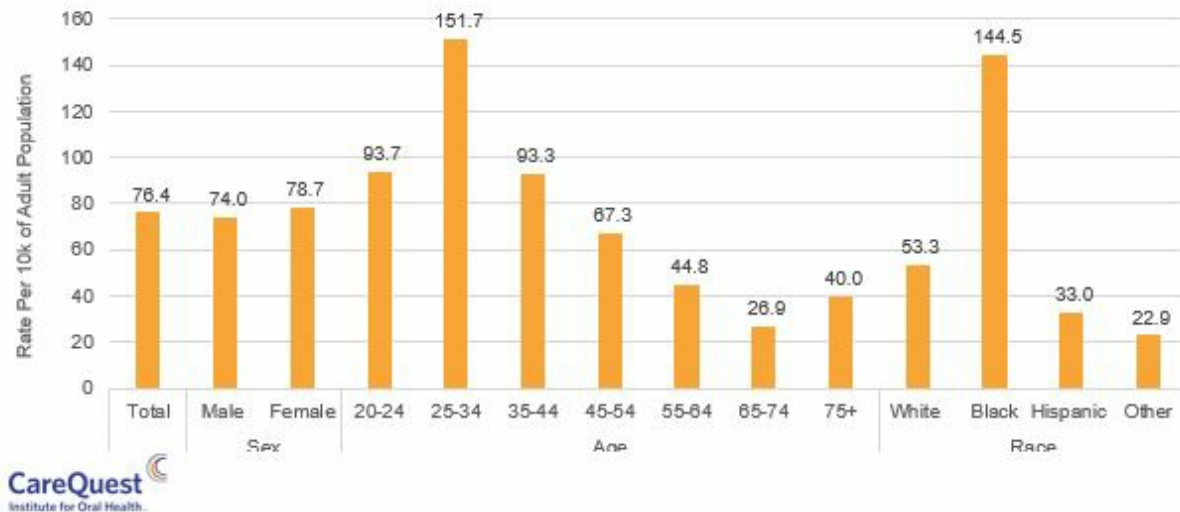## Annual Percent Increase in Average Charges Per Visit Among Adults in Maryland by ED Visit Type

4

Distribution of Payers of ED Visits for Non-Traumatic Dental Conditions among Adults in Maryland, FY2019

OTHER, 1%

UNINSURED:
13%; 4,392; $2,108,191

COMMERCIAL INSURANCE:
19%; 6,529; $4,370,054

MEDICARE:
13%; 4,653; $3,749,609

MEDICAID:
54%; 18,737;
$10,330,927

■ Commercial Insurance   ■ Medicaid   ■ Medicare   ■ Uninsured   ■ Other

42

The report also notes that ED visits for NTDCs were highest among adults ages 25-34, and steadily decrease with age. There are also vast racial disparities in the rates of ED visits for NTDCs, with Blacks having nearly three times the rate of other racial and ethnic groups.

Rate of ED Visits for Non-Traumatic Dental Conditions Among Adults, by Age, Sex, and Race in FY 2019

Although many Maryland adults face serious financial obstacles to obtaining dental care, Maryland is one of only a handful of states that does not provide dental coverage for all adults in the Medicaid program. Maryland only provides adult dental coverage for narrow eligibility categories, such as dual-eligible (Medicare/Medicaid) adults, pregnant and postpartum women, and young adults who have aged out of foster care. A lack of routine dental care can lead to serious oral health issues that drive adults to the emergency room with tooth pain and oral infections, but for most adults, Medicaid will only guarantee coverage for antibiotics and pain management for dental conditions, not treatment for the cause of the problem.

The updated study underscores the opportunity to reduce ED visits for chonic dental conditions by expanding dental benefits to all adults in Medicaid - a win-win for both the oral and overall health of Maryland adults and the fiscal health of Medicaid.

MDAC is deeply grateful to the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health for their support of this study and MDAC's work to secure a Medicaid dental benefit for all Maryland adults.

Read the report: **Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits for Dental Conditions in Maryland: An Update**

MDAC URGES CONGRESS TO SUPPORT MEDICAID DENTAL BENEFIT ACT
Bill would make Medicaid adult dental coverage mandatory

In an **August 11, 2021 letter,** MDAC joined other Maryland stakeholders and oral health advocates across the nation to urge Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and Committee Chairs Senator Ron Wyden (Committee on Finance) and U.S. Representative Frank Pallone, Jr. (Energy and Commerce Committee) to support **H.R. 4439, the Medicaid Dental Benefit Act** The bill, introduced by U.S. Representative Nanette Diaz Barragán (D-CA-44), would make adult dental services mandatory for all adults in Medicaid.

Although children enrolled in Medicaid have comprehensive dental coverage, adult dental coverage is optional for state Medicaid programs. (Maryland is one of just a handful of states that does not have an adult dental benefit for all adults on Medicaid.) Without the same dental coverage as children, dental care is simply out-of-reach for millions of low-income adults.

The Medicaid Dental Benefit Act would:
- End the confusing patchwork of Medicaid adult dental coverage that currently exists from state to state by making adult dental services a mandatory coverage category for all adults in Medicaid;
- Ensure that everyone gets the care they need by establishing a more comprehensive definition of Medicaid dental and oral health services for adults;
- Help states make this benefit a reality by increasing federal matching funds (FMAP) for Medicaid dental services;
- Set up standards for good care by establishing oral health quality measures for the adult population; and
- Account for racial equity and disparities, investing in outreach efforts to connect adults in underserved communities to oral health care and funding culturally competent and linguistically appropriate provider education.

Studies show that Medicaid programs that do not include dental benefits spend more on treating and managing chronic diseases. An important study published in the Journal of Dental Research, **Dental Services and Health Outcomes in the New York State Medicaid Program**, demonstrates the effect of preventive dental care on health outcomes and Medicaid costs. The study of New York State Medicaid recipients, nearly two-thirds of whom have one or more chronic diseases, determined that the provision of preventive dental services for a publicly insured population with significant systemic disease could help reduce emergency department and inpatient admissions and costs. This milestone study demonstrates the association between dental care and better health outcomes, quantifies the financial benefits of dental coverage for adults on Medicaid, and provides a roadmap to enact policies to improve oral and overall health outcomes and the fiscal health of Medicaid.

There is also an economic cost to poor oral health when individuals are unable to seek or sustain employment due to the condition of their mouths. A **University of Michigan study** assessed the impact of Medicaid expansion in Michigan on the health and lives of low-income people who enrolled. In all, 60% of the enrollees surveyed had visited a dentist at least once since enrolling in the plan, with the majority (57%) of respondents stating that their oral health had improved. Of those who had jobs and reported improved oral health, 76% said that their coverage helped them do a better job at work. Meanwhile, nearly two-thirds of the unemployed people credited the coverage with helping them look for permanent employment.

Passage of the Medicaid Dental Act would help address the social determinants of health that disproportionately affect the nation's most vulnerable citizens and help all adults, regardless of their race, socioeconomic status or special circumstances, gain equitable access to oral health care.

ADA TO HOST WEBINARS ON PATIENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
Free four-part webinar series starts September 10

The American Dental Association (ADA) will launch a four-part webinar series in September to address some of the challenges people with disabilities face in accessing dental care.

Achieving Optimal Oral Health will use formal presentations, open discussions, and video interviews to provide information dental providers, dental educators, patients, and caregivers can use to improve the oral health of people with special needs. The webinars will guide families and caregivers of people with disabilities through the dental office, show dental providers how they can make the dental office more inclusive for patients with special health care needs, and how the use of teledentistry and portable dentistry can improve access to care and prevent disease. The final webinar will focus on educating future dental professionals so they have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competence to provide compassionate, quality care to this patient population.

To learn more and to register, see:**https://www.ada.org/en/publications/ada-news/2021-archive/august/september-webinar-series-shines-spotlight-on-patients-with-special-needs**

OOH URGES HPV VACCINATIONS
Catch Up Now: Protect Preteens from HPV-Associated Cancers

The article below was submitted by the Maryland Department of Health Office of Oral Health:

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, well-child visits and annual physicals, including visits for routine vaccinations, were largely put on hold to prioritize urgent needs and reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19. This led to a significant drop in childhood and adolescent vaccinations, including vaccinations for the prevention of HPV infection that can lead to six types of cancers, including oral cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the HPV vaccine is recommended for preteen boys and girls at age 11 or 12 because it provides protection before exposure to the virus and produces a more robust immune response during the preteen years.

Recent studies show that a patient who receives a strong provider recommendation is four to five times more likely to receive the HPV vaccine. With stay-at-home orders lifted, it is essential that families be invited back into health systems, clinics, and offices to protect their children from deadly, vaccine-preventable diseases. This includes the HPV vaccine which is essential in preventing HPV-associated cancers.

More information for health professionals and the general public on the HPV vaccine can be found **here.**

CATHOLIC CHARITIES SEEKS FULL TIME DENTAL ASSISTANT
Volunteers also needed for mini Mission of Mercy clinics

Catholic Charities, a social ministry outreach of the Archdiocese of Washington, is seeking a full time dental assistant for their Temple Hills office. For further information and to apply, **click here.**

Catholic Chalrities is also seeking volunteers for three mini Mission of Mercy dental clinics: September 18 in Silver Spring, October 16 in Temple Hills, and November 20 in Washington, DC. The clinics will provide free dental services, including restorations, extractions, and patient education. The goal is to serve 20-25 patients at each clinic. Dentists, dental assistants, interpreters, and welcome team volunteers are needed at each site. **Click here** for further information and to volunteer.

> # "People who lack public or private insurance for routine dental services are more likely to forgo regular care and seek treatment in hospital EDs when an oral health problem causes pain or other complications."
>
> *-Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits for Dental Conditions in Maryland: An Update*

NEWS & RESOURCES

Cancer

Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan

COVID-19

ADA Updates Its Guide to Safe Dental Practice During COVID-19

British Study Shows COVID-19 Vaccine Efficacy Wanes Under Delta

Back to School amidst the New Normal: Ongoing Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Children's Health and Well-Being

A Coming Surge in Oral Health Treatment Needs

Dentists are an Untapped Resource for Delivering COVID-19 Vaccines

OSHA to Enforce COVID-19 Safety Rules for Healthcare Providers

Diabetes

Maryland Diabetes Action Plan

Disease Prevention

Look After Your Teeth to Protect Against Cognitive Decline in Old Age

Improving the Oral Health of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

MD ADULT DENTAL WAIVER PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

Thousands of Maryland adults are accessing dental care through the Medicaid Adult Dental Waiver Program.

According to Maryland Medicaid, from January 1, 2021 through August 3, 2021:

- **5,221 claims were submitted**
- **3,201 unique members filed valid claims**
- **168 members met annual $800 cap**
- **512 unique providers submitted claims**
- **$826,052 paid**

From January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020:

- **7,919 claims were submitted**
- **4,140 unique members filed valid claims**
- **313 members met annual $800 cap**
- **576 unique providers submitted claims**
- **$1,283,326 paid**

Note: 2020 numbers have been adjusted to reflect claims received after the first of the year for services performed in 2020.

Since the June 1, 2019 launch of the Medicaid Adult Dental Waiver Program, Medicaid has paid

[Caries Status of First-born Child is a Predictor for Caries Experience in Younger Siblings](#)

[OSAP Announces New Website and CE Center](#)

[Considering Oral Care in Children with Special Health Care Needs](#)

Health Equity

[Effects of Racism on Oral Health in the United States](#)

[Anti-Racism in Dental Public Health: A Call to Action](#)

[America's Health Rankings: 2021 Health Disparties Report](#)

[Behavioral and Social Determinants of Oral Health in Children With Special Health Care Needs](#)

[The Moment is Now: Congress Must Take Steps to Address the Black Maternal Health Crisis](#)

HPV

[HPV Dental Toolkit](#)

Maternal and Child Health

[A Surprising Side Effect of Giving Birth: The Curious Link Between Motherhood and Dental Problems](#)

Medicaid/Dental Integration

[Integrating Dental Hygienists into Medical Care Teams: Practitioner and Patient Perspectives](#)

[Boldly Evolving Dentistry Into Whole-Person Care Part I: Why Dentistry Lags In Quality Measurement](#)

[Boldly Evolving Dentistry Into Whole-Person Care Part II: History Of Quality Measurement In Medicine](#)
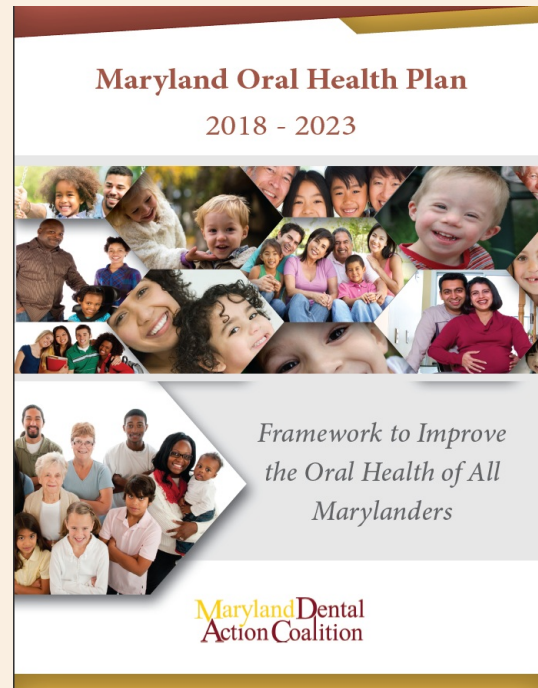
[Inclusion of Oral Health Teams in Primary Health Care Promotes Early Diagnosis of Oral and Oropharyngeal Cancers: A Nationwide Study](#)

[How Patient-Centered Medical Homes Integrate Dental Services Into Primary Care: A Scoping Review](#)

[Making the Case for Interprofessional Education and Practice Collaboration](#)

$3,469,470 in dental services for thousands of Maryland adults.

2018-2023 MARYLAND ORAL HEALTH PLAN GOALS

The 2018-2023 Maryland Oral Health Plan outlines 11 oral health goals in three key areas: access to oral health care, oral disease and injury prevention, and oral health literacy and education.

[DOWNLOAD THE PLAN](#)

The Maryland Oral Health Plan is financially supported by the Maryland Department of Health.

PODCASTS

[Dentistry and Dementia: The Importance of Caring for Oral Health](#)

WEBINARS

[Equity, Structural Racism, and Public Health Law, August 24, 2021](#)

[Transforming Child Health Care Through Anti-Racist, Family-Driven Approaches, August 25, 2021](#)

[Disrupting Data: What is Gathered and Why it Matters for Advancing Community-Centered Policies, August 31, 2021](#)

[Consumer Perspectives on Oral Health Access, Outcomes, and Quality of Care (recorded)](#)

to Address Rising Rates of HPV-Associated Oropharyngeal Cancers

Medicaid

Strengthening the Enrollment Assistance Infrastructure for Dually Eligible Individuals

ADA Supports Extending Dental Coverage to All Adults on Medicaid

Momentum for Dental Coverage Grows with Proposed Medicaid Dental Benefit Act in Congress

Making the Case for Dental Coverage for Adults in All State Medicaid Programs

New Data: Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage is Wise Investment for Economic Recovery, Health

Caries Disparities Among Medicaid-Enrolled Young Children from Pediatric Primary Care Settings

Life After COVID: CMS Guidance Addresses Advocate Concerns About the End of the Public Health Emergency

Medicare

National Survey Finds Broad, Bipartisan Support For Medicare Dental Coverage

ADA Advocates for Medicare Dental Benefits to Focus on Low-Income Seniors Amid Federal Budget Discussions

Medicare and Dental Coverage: A Closer Look

Why Doesn't Medicare Cover Services So Many Seniors Need?

Oral Health & Overall Health

The Connection Between Oral Health and Mental Health

Rural Health

NRHA COVID-19 Resources

Sealants

Acculturation and Dental Sealant Use Among US Children

EVENTS

MDAC Biennial Oral Health Summit November 10, 2021

The Benefits of Integrating Oral Health Into Overall Health, September 8-9, 2021 (virtual)

2021 Healthy Aging Symposium, September 8-9, 2021 (virtual)

Public Health Law Conference Building and Supporting Healthy Communities for All, September 21-23, 2021

ADA SmileCon, October 11-13, 2021

Public Health Learning Forum, October 12-21, 2021 (virtual)

UMD Health Literacy in Action Conference, October 14-15, 2021 (virtual)

MRHA Rural Health Conference: Rural Resiliency, Reflection, & Recovery, October 18-19, 2021 (virtual)

APHA 2021: Creating the Healthiest Nation: Strengthening Social Connectedness Meeting, October 24-27, 2021

2021 NNOHA Annual Conference, November 14-17, 2021

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

U.S. Senators (MD)

U.S. Representatives (MD)

Maryland State Legislators

SUPPORT MDAC

Dental Sealants: A Resource Guide

Teledentistry

Teledentistry: What to Know & How It Works

New Survey Suggests Optimism about Teledentistry Experience and Access

Preparing for Teledentistry: A Guide for Dental Practices

Teledentistry Use Beyond the Pandemic

Give a little to make a big impact! Your gifts, both large and small, will be used to promote good oral health behaviors, prevent oral disease and injury, and improve access to oral health care for all Marylanders, no matter where they live or what their special circumstances might be. Please help us continue this important work.

DONATE NOW!

MDAC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and contributions to support its activities are most appreciated. Thank you.

MDAC is pleased to welcome the following new member:

- Ellen Dalina, Maryland Department of Health
- Brieana Harrison

Join us! To become a MDAC member, **click here.**

CONTACT

Do you have events or announcements you'd like to share? Contact MDAC, and we'll make every effort to include them in our next newsletter, as space permits.

Contact MDAC

JOIN

MDAC is statewide coalition of clinical care providers, governments, non-profits, academic institutions, managed care organizations, foundations and associations working collaboratively to improve the health of all Marylanders through increased oral health promotion, disease prevention, education, advocacy and access to oral health care.

Join MDAC

www.mdac.us

FOLLOW US