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March 2025

2025 MARYLAND SESSION: MDAC ADDRESSES DENTAL WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

April 23 webinar will provide an update on session outcomes and next steps to advance workforce issues

Please join the Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) on **Wednesday, April 23 at 12pm** and hear legislative updates, reflections on the current state political climate, and future opportunities to continue to improve oral health in Maryland. [Robyn Elliott](#), MDAC's Policy and Government Affairs Consultant, will be the lead presenter.

Learn about MDAC's legislative package centered on workforce development, which addresses gaps in access for children, underserved communities and Medicaid participants and how you can help us continue this valuable work. Registration is required.



Register Now!

AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION RESOURCES ADDRESS BARRIERS TO DENTAL CARE IN MEDICAID

New resources provide guidance to improve provider participation in state Medicaid

To help states increase Medicaid participation among their dentist workforces and dental care utilization among their Medicaid populations, the ADA Health Policy Institute surveyed dentists and Medicaid beneficiaries in eight states – **Maryland**, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and South Dakota. The surveys measured barriers to going to the dentist and achieving optimal oral health among beneficiaries and barriers to participating in Medicaid among dentists.

In response, the ADA has recently developed two Medicaid Provider Resources to outline strategies to (1) reduce denials and improve efficiency and (2) to reduce patient missed appointments.

- [Barriers to Dental Care Among Adult Medicaid Beneficiaries: A Comprehensive Analysis in Eight States](#)
- [A Medicaid Provider Resource: Strategies to Reduce Denials and Improve Efficiency](#)
- [A Medicaid Provider Resource: Strategies to Reduce Patient Missed Appointments](#)

ADA RESEARCH BRIEF: What Happens if Adult Medicaid Dental Goes Away?

If federal aid to state Medicaid programs is reduced, states will face considerable budgetary challenges to keep Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled and provided with the same level of services and adult dental Medicaid coverage would be particularly vulnerable to reimbursement, service, and eligibility cuts under these circumstances. As a result, states will see significant increased costs due to emergency department visits for dental conditions and unmet periodontal needs among pregnant beneficiaries and beneficiaries with diabetes and coronary artery disease. A recently issued brief released by the ADA specifically looks at these implications if Medicaid dental is eliminated from Medicaid program.



In this analysis, ADA HPI estimates the increased medical care costs that would result from the removal of adult Medicaid benefits in 41 states and District of Columbia that offer limited or enhanced dental benefits. For each state, ADA HPI used the number of Medicaid-enrolled adults utilizing dental care to calculate estimated costs. ADA HPI estimates represent increased downstream health care costs for emergency department visits and treatment of periodontitis among pregnant beneficiaries and beneficiaries with diabetes and coronary artery disease.

Important Note: Costs in tables included in this brief reflect states that have limited or enhanced dental benefits for adults under **Medicaid in 2021**. Maine, **Maryland**, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Tennessee expanded Medicaid

benefits after 2021; therefore, costs in the brief for these states are underestimated. **See below for updated figures.**

Read the ADA Research Brief

Impact in Maryland: An Analysis from ADA/HPI

Using data on utilization rates of the Maryland Medical Assistance – Dental Coverage for Adults in 2024, the ADA/HPI provided estimates on the impact of losing adult dental coverage in Maryland.

For Maryland, ADA HPI estimates that the total 1-year increase in health care costs due to removing Medicaid adult dental benefits is **\$42,756,032**. Specifically, this represents the cost for patients with coronary artery disease who do not receive care for periodontitis, \$4,323,923, patients with diabetes who do not receive care for periodontitis, \$30,295,381, pregnant patients who do not receive care for periodontitis \$642,511, and the expected cost of increased dental emergency visits due to losing access to routine dental care \$7,464,218. The total 5-year cost for Maryland is \$213,781,160.

In addition, 29% of low-income adults in the US have a hard time finding a job due to oral health pain. We estimate that in one year, 53,467 adults in Maryland would experience challenges finding work due to their oral health if Medicaid adult dental benefits were to be removed.

What can you do to help?

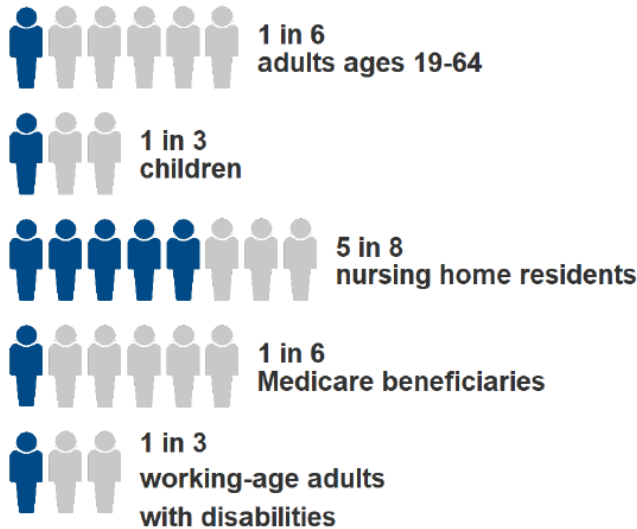
Please share this information with colleagues, advocates, and oral health champions. Now is the time to discuss the importance of Medicaid and access to a dental home and continue to promote optimal oral health.

Additional Resources: [Federal Medicaid Dental Hub](#) sponsored by Community Catalyst:

- [Federal Medicaid Dental Hub Slides – 3/13/25](#)
- [Resource & Rapid Response Roundup – 3/13/25](#)
- [Federal Medicare dental, vision, and hearing bills](#)
- [New Congressional Budget Office Report](#)
- [KFF Polling on Work Requirements](#)
- [2025 Marketplace Integrity and Affordability Proposed Rule](#)

In addition, the [Community Catalyst Medicaid Defense Toolkit](#), includes factsheets, email scripts, talking points, messaging guides, and social media tools. Please visit frequently as new resources will be posted when they become available.

In MD, Medicaid Covers:



Source: KFF Medicaid in Maryland Factsheet

MEDICARE DENTAL, VISION, AND HEARING BENEFIT ACT, 2025

Legislation Introduced to Expand Oral Health Coverage

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont) and Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-Texas) introduced bicameral legislation to expand access to dental, hearing and vision care in Medicare. There is a dire need for oral health coverage in Medicare, and MDAC has long called for a comprehensive dental benefit to be added to Part B of Traditional Medicare. Oral health care has been separated from overall health care for older adults and people with disabilities who rely on Medicare, resulting in adverse health consequences. MDAC supports this legislation and looks forward to working with partners throughout the US in urging members of Congress on a robust and comprehensive dental benefit in Part B of Medicare, available to all Medicare beneficiaries, and integrated with the delivery of other health care benefits.

[Click here for a summary of the bill for Sanders' Medicare Dental, Hearing, and Vision Expansion Act.](#)

[Here is the bill text for Doggett's Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act.](#)

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DENTISTRY AWARDS MDAC

National award is first AAPHD Service Award to state oral health coalition since established

The American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) has selected the Maryland Dental Action Coalition as the **2025 recipient of the AAPHD National**

Public Service Award. Established in 1985, this annual award recognizes substantial contributions through action related to public health dentistry issues.

MDAC is profoundly grateful for this recognition, particularly from the association representing public health providers. The critical role and significance of public health dentistry to address oral health disparities in Maryland cannot be overstated.

Through MDAC's partnerships in the public health community throughout the state, hundreds of thousands of Marylanders are in a better, healthier place. This is in large part due to the commitment and compassion of public health dentists to their profession and to the well-being of all people, no matter their age or what their special circumstances may be.

The award will be presented to MDAC Chief Executive Officer Mary Backley during the AAPHD Awards Ceremony at the 2025 National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) on Sunday, April 6 in Orlando, FL.



MARYLAND RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION SEEKS INPUT

Gathering feedback to better understand challenges in rural Maryland

MDAC partner, the Maryland Rural Health Association, is gathering feedback from Maryland residents to understand public transportation needs and challenges in rural Maryland. MDAC is pleased to assist in this effort and encourages your participation. Responses will help improve accessibility and effectiveness for healthcare, errands, and everyday needs. [Complete the survey today!](#)



The following article was submitted by the Maryland Department of Health Office of Oral Health.



Maryland Dent-Care Loan Assistance Repayment Programs for Dentists and Dental Hygienists - Now Accepting Applications!

The [Maryland Dent Care Loan Assistance Repayment Program](#) (MDC-LARP) is the student loan repayment program for dentists and dental hygienists. The purpose of MDC-LARP is to increase access to oral health care services for Maryland Medical Assistance Program (MMAP) recipients by increasing the number of dentists and dental hygienists treating this population.

During the 2023 Maryland legislative session, House Bill 290/Senate Bill 237 increased the loan repayment to \$50,000* per year for a three-year commitment for dentists and included the addition of dental hygienists for \$10,000* per year for a two-year commitment.

Applicant eligibility requirements for the Maryland Dent-Care Loan Assistance Program are:

- Be a licensed Dentist or Dental Hygienist in the State of Maryland
- Have an outstanding higher education loan debt
- Be able to serve three years (Dentist)/two years (Dental Hygienist) in a full-time (40 hours) eligible dental practice site(s).
- Treat a minimum of 30% MMAP recipients as a portion of the total patient population.
- Be enrolled with MMAP's Maryland Healthy Smiles Dental Program. (Dental Hygienists to be supervised by a Medical Assistance Provider)
- Able to keep record of all patients treated (MMAP and non-MMAP) and provide monthly written reports to the Office of Oral Health.
- Comply with Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Infection Control protocols.

Applications are now being accepted are due no later than July 31, 2025. Application materials, along with additional information about the Program, can be found on the Office of Oral Health's website.

Questions? Contact Stacy Costello, MDC LARP Program Manager, mdh.mdclarpprogram@maryland.gov

*The award amount and number of recipients per award is to be determined based on available funding.

“Without coverage, many will delay care or turn to emergency rooms, driving up health care costs and worsening health outcomes”

**Melissa Burroughs, Director of Public Policy,
CareQuest Institute for Oral Health**

Axios, March 5, 2025. “Medicaid Cuts Put Adult Dental on the Chopping Block”

NEWS & RESOURCES

Access to Care

[Community Health Centers Get Another Shot-Term Funding Bill,](#)

RESOURCE: Provider Enrollment Flyer

[Need Long-Term Support](#)

Fluoride

[Journal of Dental Hygiene, Fluoride in 2025](#)

[Myths & Facts: Responses to common anti-fluoride claims](#)

[NIH Fluoride Fact Sheet for Consumers, English](#)

[NIH Fluoride Fact Sheet for Consumers, Spanish](#)

[MDH Community Water Fluoridation](#)

Medicaid

[10 Things to Know About Medicaid](#)

[Voters Want Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage](#)

[Dental Leaders Sound Alarm on Potential Medicaid Cuts](#)

[Medicaid Dental on the Chopping Block](#)

[Poll finds support for stable or increased Medicaid funding, including among Trump voters](#)

[GOP tax cut plans may depend on savings from Medicaid. What is it and who relies on it?](#)

[Medicaid cuts rippling through rural areas could bring hospital closures, job losses](#)

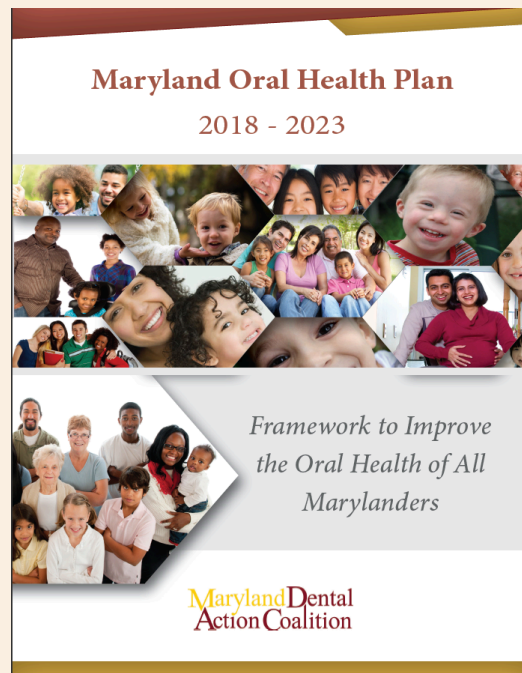
[Providers to Experience Revenue Loss and Uncompensated Care Increases if Medicaid Expansion Support Decreases](#)

[Congressional Republicans Can't Cut Medicaid by Hundreds of Billions Without Hurting People](#)

[5 Key Facts About Immigrants and Medicaid](#)

To learn how Maryland dental providers can enroll in the Maryland Healthy Smiles Dental Program and resources provided, [review this enrollment flyer](#) and share with others!

RESOURCE: Maryland Oral Health Plan



The 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.

Legislative Contacts

[U.S. Senators \(MD\)](#)

[U.S. Representatives \(MD\)](#)

Medicare

[Voters are Ready for Medicare Dental](#)

[A Cut to Medicaid is a Cut to Medicare](#)

Oral Health and Substance Use Disorder

[Making the Connection to Care: Oral Health and Substance Use Disorder - NASHP](#)

Pediatric Oral Health

[Advances and Challenges in Pediatric Oral Health](#)

Teledentistry

[How a Pilot Program is Transforming Dental Care for Patients with Disabilities](#)

Veterans

[Voters Demand Dental Coverage for Veterans](#)

Workforce

[Strategies to Optimize the Medicaid Oral Health Workforce](#)

[Florida's Dentist Shortage Leads to an Opening for Dental Therapy](#)

[Will a New Dental School in Georgia Help or Hurt Access to Care?](#)

[Hygienist Inspired Chairside Recruitment Program Launches](#)

[Maryland State Legislators](#)

Meetings/ Events/ Webinars

[National Oral Health Conference Innovations in Oral Health and Beyond](#)
[April 7-9, 2025](#)
[Orlando, FL](#)

[National Voices of Medicare Summit](#)
[Center for Medicare Advocacy](#)
[May 14, 2025](#)
[Kaiser Family Foundation Barbara Jordan Conference Center](#)
[Washington, DC and via Live Webcast](#)



Join us! To become an 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

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