



JANUARY 2023

Maryland State Senator Outlines Utility of Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage

State of Reform features Senator Malcolm Augustine (D-Prince George's County), cosponsor of SB150



In a December 2022 article by State Health Reform featuring a conversation with state Senator Malcolm Augustine (D – Prince George's County), the Maryland legislator and oral health champion addresses historical legislation passed during the 2022 session mandating Maryland Medicaid adult dental coverage, starting January 1, 2023. Senator Augustine notes one of the inspirations that championed his co-sponsorship of Senate Bill 150 – attending a free dental service event at the University of Maryland where thousands of adults wait hours online to receive donated care from providers due to a lack of dental coverage. Other bill cosponsors include Senator Guy Guzzone (D-

Howard County) and Delegates Bonnie Cullison (D-Montgomery County and Senator Mike McKay (R-Allegany and Washington Counties). Maryland legislator Mike McKay, a Delegate during the 2022 session, was recently elected to the Maryland Senate. In passing the legislation, Maryland legislators made an important statement on the value of enacting policies that incorporate changes in state health systems to better address the health and well-being of all Marylanders.

There is a reason that most 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 healthcare costs and contributes to health disparities. Due to the correlation between oral health and chronic health conditions, Senator Augustine noted that Medicaid adult dental coverage would lower Medicaid costs in the long term.

"When I looked at the data, [it] showed us that this would save us money in the long run," he said. "For example, with the improved dental care, you are able to identify other problem areas for folks because you save money by getting care for them earlier ... in the long run, [this] would be a net positive for us."

Sen. Augustine expressed that while excited about the implementation of the program, he also noted that there are other hurdles states need to address to support the program, including a number of providers who accept Medicaid and how to lower individual barriers or challenges people face to accessing care, including the lack of awareness of dental coverage, gaps in oral health literacy, and knowledge of the correlation between oral health to overall, general health.

Please download the feature article in the State of Reform in its entirety [here](#)

State of Reform focuses on bridging the gap between health care and health policy by engaging stakeholders from state health care using a variety of platforms, providing a source and broad spectrum of policy insights to share and foster meaningful, lasting reform in the health policy sector.

Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults

MDAC develops easy-to-access information and presentations to augment outreach

On January 1, 2023, after a successful multi-year strategic campaign, approximately 800,000 Maryland Medicaid adult beneficiaries gained access to comprehensive dental coverage. This is a major victory for Maryland and the many low-income adults and people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid for critical health care services, estimated at 1 out of



every 5 Marylanders. To learn more about the dental coverage, please visit <https://www.mdac.us/medicaid/>

While the progress in Maryland is a monumental milestone in addressing equitable access to care, there is much more work to be done. For 2023, MDAC is focused on consumer education and outreach to provide clear and accurate information about the expanded dental coverage and how to access care. MDAC is working to engage the care

coordinator community (such as social workers, community health workers, health educators, case managers, etc.) about these benefits as they provide direct-to-consumer services that support the independence and well-being of the Medicaid adult population.

MDAC is seeking opportunities to promote the significant expansion of adult dental coverage by connecting with community partners, coalitions, alliances, conferences, etc, to share updates and resources around the new dental coverage, what services are available, how to check eligibility, and how/where to access care. MDAC has prepared a 30-minute presentation to be shared virtually during meetings, as well as some resources. If you would like to have MDAC present at your upcoming meeting, please [fill out an MDAC presentation request](#).

If you and your staff need information about the expanded Maryland Medicaid adult dental coverage, please refer to MDAC's informational landing page <https://www.mdac.us/medicaid/> and the corresponding digital one-pager ([link English and Spanish](#)). Please feel free to share this with your networks.

It's undoubtedly been a long road to finally ensure that Maryland Medicaid beneficiaries have access to this vital form of health care, but this victory shows us that it is possible and that it is worth the fight. With your help, MDAC can support all eligible adults with Medicaid being able to access the critical oral health care they need.

World Health Organization (WHO) Global Oral Health Status Report 2022

Provides pictures of oral disease burden and highlights opportunities to accelerate progress



Oral health is integral to general health and supports individuals participating in society to achieve their potential. Yet oral diseases are the most widespread noncommunicable diseases affecting almost half of the world's population (45% or 3.5 billion people worldwide) over the life course from early life to old age.

[WHO's Global oral health status report \(GOHSR\)](#) provides the first-ever comprehensive picture of oral disease burden and highlights challenges and opportunities to accelerate progress toward universal coverage for oral health. This includes introducing oral health profiles of countries based on the latest available data from the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) project, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and global WHO surveys. It emphasizes the global impact of oral disease on our health and well-being and highlights stark inequalities, with a higher disease burden for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged population groups within and across societies.

The GOHSR is part of WHO's series of data reports and an important milestone in the larger process of mobilizing political action and resources for oral health. Nearly 20 years after the publication of The World Oral Health Report 2003 and in alignment with the landmark [WHA 74.5 Resolution on oral health](#) (2021), the GOHSR will serve as a reference for policy-makers and provide orientation for a wide range of stakeholders across different sectors; and guide the advocacy process towards better prioritization of oral health in global, regional and national contexts.

American Academy of Pediatrics Updates Recommendations on Maintaining, Improving Children's Oral Health

Pediatricians can improve oral health by focusing on key risk factors for dental caries

More than 45% of all U.S. children experience dental caries – or tooth decay – by age 19, and disparities due to poverty, insurance, and language barriers prevent many families from accessing proper care at a dentist's office.



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) addresses this chronic and common childhood disease within an updated clinical report, [Maintaining and Improving the Oral Health of Young Children](#), published in the January 2023 Pediatrics.

“Pediatricians can help parents learn to prevent tooth decay in their children from the time they are infants, even before the first tiny teeth emerge,” said David M. Krol, MD, MPH, FAAP, lead author of the report, written by the Section on Oral Health. “Families can instill good habits early by never putting a child to bed with a bottle, avoiding sugary drinks, and serving as role models by brushing and flossing regularly.”

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The AAP advises that children drink only water between meals, preferably fluoridated tap water, and avoid juice intake before age 1. The intake of juice should be limited to, at most, 4 ounces per day in toddlers ages 1 through 3 years, and 4 to 6 ounces per day for children ages 4 through 6. For children ages 7 to 18 years, juice intake should be limited to 8 ounces or 1 cup of the recommended 2 to 2.5 cups of fruit servings per day.

Fluoride is also critically important to prevent dental caries, especially for those who do not have early or consistent ongoing dental care.

“Most bottled waters do not contain an adequate amount of fluoride,” said Kaitlin Whelan, MD, FAAP, co-author of the report. “Fluoride toothpastes and rinses are helpful, and the pediatrician or dentist can also apply fluoride varnish to the teeth two to four times annually, a practice that we know reduces substantially the risks of dental caries.”

The AAP also recommends that pediatricians:

- Assess children’s oral health risks at health maintenance and other relevant visits.
- Include anticipatory guidance for oral health as an integral part of comprehensive patient counseling.
- Counsel parents, caregivers, and patients on ways to cut back on sugary drinks and foods.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to maintain their own good oral health and to brush a child’s teeth at least twice a day as soon as teeth erupt. Use a smear or a grain-of-rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste, increasing to a pea-sized amount when a child reaches age 3.
- Advise parents and caregivers to assist in and monitor brushing until a child turns 10.

The AAP clinical report, [Fluoride Use in Caries Prevention in the Primary Care Setting](#), provides more information on fluoride administration and supplementation decisions. Pediatricians are encouraged to build and maintain collaborative relationships with local dental providers and recommend that every child has a dental home by age 1.

“We have made strides in treating more children for tooth decay over the past decade,” Dr. Krol said. “But preventing decay is always the best way to go. I think the tooth fairy would agree.”

HealthyChildren.org offers an additional resource for parents: [Good Oral Health Starts Early: AAP Policy Explained](#).

Oral Health Nursing and Practice Program Issues Case Studies

Studies used in student and clinician interprofessional simulation and clinical experiences



The Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice (OHNEP) program is a national initiative aimed at preparing a nursing workforce with the competencies to prioritize oral disease prevention and health promotion, provide evidence-based oral healthcare in a variety of practice settings, and collaborate in

interprofessional teams across the healthcare system. The overarching goal of this national initiative is to create an educational infrastructure for the nursing profession that advances nursing's contribution to reducing oral health disparities across the lifespan.

A complete collection of OHNEP's Interprofessional Oral Health Clinical Case Studies is now available. The innovative clinical case studies demonstrate the many ways in which oral health and overall health are linked, as well as the role of intersectional collaboration across professions and settings in providing effective whole-person care that aims to improve health equity. These original case studies have been used in many successful student and clinician interprofessional oral health simulations and clinical experiences and are included in our [faculty tool kits](#). They incorporate the social determinants of health in clinical exemplars of oral-systemic health in patients across the lifespan with health conditions including diabetes, COVID-19,

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH



OOH joining with ADA to promote "Brush Floss Smile" theme



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

February is National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM). Every February, dental organizations and providers throughout the nation take time to inform and educate the public about the importance of children's oral health. This February, the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Oral Health will join with the American Dental Association to promote the 2023 National Children's Dental Health Month theme, "Brush Floss Smile."

The "Brush Floss Smile" planning guide, posters, and activity sheets are available free of charge via the American

Dental Association's [website](#). Additional free resources are available via the Office of Oral Health's [website](#).

Give Kids A Smile Day

The Give Kids A Smile® (GKAS) program, launched nationally in 2003, provides underserved children with free oral health care. Each year approximately 6,500 dentists and 30,000 dental team members volunteer at local GKAS events to provide free oral health education, screenings, and preventive and restorative treatment to over 300,000 children.

On February 3, 2023, The MSDA Foundation will host GKAS events at various locations across the State of Maryland. . The Office of Oral Health's Regional Coordinators will be at some of these events. For more information on GKAS event sites and volunteer sign-up, click [here](#).

National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center Activities and Information



National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center

adolescents, including those with special health care needs, and their families (the maternal and child health (MCH) population).

The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) is federally funded to respond to the needs of professionals working in states and communities, with the goal of improving oral health care for pregnant women, infants, children, and

Use OHRC's website to locate materials in our [library](#), explore [topics](#) related to oral health for the MCH population, and share [resources for consumers](#), and [resources for professionals](#). Sign up for our monthly [e-newsletter](#) and [e-mail discussion lists](#) and [contact us](#) for further assistance. OHRC's activities for this special observance include:

- A National Children's Dental Health Month Tweetchat on Wednesday, February 22, at 2 pm ET, co-hosted by the [Arcora Foundation](#) and [Oral Health Watch](#).
- A webinar on Thursday, February 23, at 1 pm ET, [Best Practices and Innovative Approaches to Strengthen School-Based Dental Sealant Programs](#), hosted by the CareQuest Institute, the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, and OHRC will explore the updated [School-Based Dental Sealant Program Best Practice Approach Report](#).

"By extending additional dental benefits to adults on Medicaid, Maryland policymakers recognized that oral health impacts overall health, wellness,

and economic security. This is a critical step toward improving access to care and creating an equitable oral health system for the people of Maryland."

Letter to the Editor, The Baltimore Sun, January 6, 2023. Mary Backley, CEO, Maryland Dental

Action Coalition and Kaz Rafia, Chief Equity Officer, CareQuest Institute for Oral Health.

NEWS & RESOURCES

Access to Care

[Sparking Change in Oral Health – CareQuest Institute for Oral Health 2022 Impact Report Includes feature on MDAC network efforts to secure comprehensive Medicaid adult dental coverage](#)

[Maryland's Successful Path to Securing Dental Coverage for Low-Income Adults \(2022\)](#)

[A Decade in the Making: How Hawai'i Oral Health Advocates Reinstated Adult Dental Coverage](#)

Cancer

[Discussing HPV and Detecting Oral Cancer The Role of Oral Health Providers](#)

[Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan](#)

[Dentists have a place on cancer teams.](#)

COVID-19

[The Progressive Magazine: Community Health Centers were on the Frontliner of COVID-19 Crisis. In the Aftermath they have Adopted to New Challenges](#)

Diabetes

[Maryland Diabetes Action Plan](#)

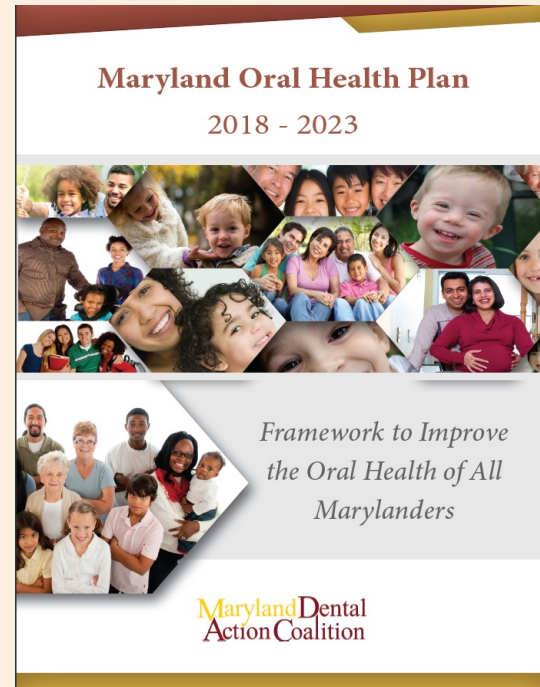
[Diabetes on the Rise for Young People](#)

Disease Prevention

[Dental Economics: Whole-person care for vulnerable patients: The value of medical-dental integration](#)

Health Equity

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.

Medical/Dental Integration

[Impact on Dental Utilization of the Integration of Oral Health in Pediatric Primary Care Through Quality Improvement.](#)

[Measuring Patient Experience of Oral Health Care: A Call to Action](#)

[Patient Centered Dental Home: Building a Framework for Dental Quality Measurement and Improvement](#)

[Hospital Integrates Dental Hygienist into Care Team](#)

[Racial And Ethnic Disparities In Dental Services Use Declined After Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Expansions](#)

[Building Community Power To Dismantle Policy-Based Structural Inequity In Population Health](#)

[Economic Well-Being And Health: The Role Of Income Support Programs In Promoting Health And Advancing Health Equity](#)

[Inside Dentistry: A growing focus on equitable oral care for people with disabilities](#)

[Podcast: Advancing Access to Integrated Oral Health Care](#)

Maternal and Child Health

[Maintaining and Improving the Oral Health of Young Children](#)

[Oral Health Risk Assessment Questions to Ask Pregnant Women](#)

[Good Oral Health Starts Early: AAP Policy Explained](#)

[Expanding Perinatal Workforce through Medicaid Coverage](#)

[Covering Doula Services Under Medicaid](#)

Medicaid/Medicare

[Determinants of Tooth Loss in a Medicaid Adult Population](#)

[Cutting Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits Would Hurt States in Unexpected Ways](#)

[Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Checker](#)

[Medicaid Expansion Associated With Some Improvements In Perinatal Mental Health](#)

[Making the Case for Dental Coverage for Adults in All State Medicaid Programs](#)

[Medicaid Expansion, Behavioral Health, And More](#)

Oral Health Data

[Emergency Departments Are No](#)

[NAHC Care Teams Digest: Oral Health and Dental Care Teams Issue](#)

Work Force

[U.S. Dental Spending Up in 2021](#)

[Geographic Access to Dental Care: Maryland](#)

[HRSA Announces Loan Programs for Health Professions Schools](#)

[Trends in Scope of Practice for Oral Health Care: Future Transformative Effects](#)

[STAT: Lawmakers should act on the evidence and expand access to dental therapists](#)

Teledentistry

[Teledentistry: Increasing Utilisation of Oral-Health Services for Children in Rural Areas](#)

[Utilization of teledentistry for prenatal oral health care. The publication features the University of California, Irvine Family Health Center.](#)

[Promising practice example presented by the National Network for Oral Health Access](#)

EVENTS

[2023 Policy & Issues Forum, Marriott Marquis, Washington, DC. March 8-11](#)

[2023 American Dental Education Association \(ADEA\) Annual Session & Exhibition March 11–14, 2023 | Portland, OR](#)

[Integrating Health Systems: Policies and Programs that Work March 27–28, 2023. Boston, MA Presented by the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Initiative to Integrate Oral Health and Medicine](#)

[2023 National Oral Health Conference April 17-19, 2023. Orlando, FL](#)

WEBINARS

[Healthy People 2030 Oral Health Promotional Series: Reducing Lifetime Tooth Decay Experience in Children & Adolescents. Wednesday, February 1st, 1:00 pm-2:00 pm ET](#)

[Innovative Approaches to Strengthen School-Based Dental Sealant Programs Thursday, February 23rd, 1:00 pm-1:00 pm ET](#)

[Place for Dental Care](#)

[Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits for Dental Conditions in Maryland: An Update](#)

[Dental Economics: New data: Americans are still not getting the dental care they need](#)

Oral Health Policy

[2022 in Review: Oral Health Policy Wins and Opportunities for the Future](#)

[State-Based Oral Health Surveillance Systems \(Revised 2022\)](#)

[Oral Health Organizations Urge Congress to Strengthen Extensive Adult Dental Benefits for All State Medicaid Programs](#)

Oral and Overall Health

[A New Oral Health Outlook for 2 million Americans](#)

[The Economic Value of Teeth](#)

Fluoridation

[Fluoride Varnish and Silver Diamine Fluoride A Resource Guide](#)

[No-Drill Dentistry: Fluoride Treatments Can Prevent Cavities In Adults](#)

[How and Why to Set Up a Successful Medical-Dental Integration Program](#)

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

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

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

[Maryland State Legislators](#)

SUPPORT MDAC



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.



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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