

IT'S UNANIMOUS!

GENERAL ASSEMBLY PASSES SB 284

Bill will establish a Medicaid adult dental coverage pilot program



House Vote: Yea: 130; Nay: 0



Senate Vote: Yea: 46; Nay: 0

On Saturday, April 7, the Maryland General Assembly unanimously passed SB 284 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults – Pilot Program*. This is a huge victory and a giant step forward in demonstrating that a Medicaid adult dental benefit is a good investment in both health outcomes and the fiscal health of Medicaid, as it enables adults to establish a dental home, obtain preventive care, and avert costly dental conditions.

“The single most important step to improve the oral health – and overall health – of Marylanders is a Medicaid program that covers dental services for adults,” said MDAC executive director Mary Backley. “Maryland has become a model for the nation in improving the oral health of children. The passage of SB 284 is an important step forward as we work to do the same for adults.”

Many Maryland adults have serious oral health issues that drive them to the emergency room with tooth pain and oral infections. Emergency rooms are unable to treat the causes of dental pain, so they treat the symptoms and send patients home with antibiotics, pain medications, or referrals for dental services that patients may not be able to afford.

In fiscal year 2016, Maryland adults made 42,327 emergency department visits for chronic dental conditions, with an average charge of \$537 per visit, or a total charge of \$22.7 million. These visits represent almost two percent of overall emergency room costs. Medicaid paid for 53 percent of those

visits, even though Medicaid participants only account for 15 percent of the adult population in Maryland - likely the result of a lack of consistent adult dental coverage in the Medicaid program.

The legislation, which is now on the Governor's desk for signature, requires the Maryland Department of Health to implement a pilot program for adult dental coverage. The department has the flexibility to consult with advocates, including MDAC, on the design of the program. The pilot, which may begin as early as January 2019, is a major step forward in establishing adult dental coverage for all adults in Medicaid.

"MDAC applauds Senator Thomas Middleton, Senator Guy Guzzone and Delegate Mike McKay for their leadership and support of SB 284, and the Maryland General Assembly for its passage," said Salliann Alborn, chair of the MDAC policy committee. "Many Maryland adults face serious financial obstacles to obtaining dental care. This pilot program is an important step forward in demonstrating that a Medicaid adult dental benefit that enables adults to establish a dental home, obtain preventive care, and avert costly dental conditions is a good investment in health outcomes and the fiscal health of Medicaid."

MDAC also thanks its members, partners, and stakeholders for their support of this important legislation that will improve the oral health and overall health of Maryland adults.

CHALMERS TO KEYNOTE AT JUNE 18 MDAC STATEWIDE CONVENING

Dr. Natalia I. Chalmers, D.D.S., PH.D., Director of Analytics and Publication at the DentaQuest Institute, will give a keynote address on *Racial Disparities and Oral Health: Identifying Opportunities for Solutions* at the upcoming MDAC statewide convening, to be held on June 18 at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City.

Studies show significant racial disparities and health inequities that reflect a lack of access to care due to financial obstacles, geographic limitations, and low oral health literacy. Yet the data also show that some racial groups have better oral and overall health than might be expected given their socio-economic status. Dr. Chalmers will discuss what drives these differences, what can we learn from them, and the opportunities to apply these learnings from one group to improve the oral health status of another.

Further details regarding the convening, including the opportunity for MDAC members, partners, and stakeholders to comment on the Medicaid adult dental pilot program, will be sent out next week.

ORAL HEALTH AMERICA RELEASES 2018 STATE OF DECAY REPORT Recommends five key actions to improve oral health in older adults



One-third of older adults have lost six or more teeth **33%**

Lower income older adults visit the dentist less frequently compared to their higher income counterparts

MEANING...

- Difficulty chewing nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables
- Loss of self-confidence
- Increased risk of chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease and gum disease

GOOD NEWS! State advocates have taken action to better the oral health of older adults.



The 2018 A State of Decay Vol. IV, a recent report by Oral Health America, measured the oral health of older adults.

Based on its findings, Oral Health America recommends advocates take five key actions to improve oral health in older adults:

- Reinstatement, establishment, or maintenance of an extensive adult Medicaid dental benefit
- Integration of comprehensive dental coverage in Medicare
- Sustaining or expanding community water fluoridation
- Including specific objectives for older adults in all state oral health plans
- Conducting basic screening surveys of older adults in all states

Maryland is already working to improve the oral health needs of adults, as evidenced by the passage of SB 284, which establishes a Medicaid adult dental pilot program.

For further information and to download a copy of the report, [click here](#).

POLICY FOCUS OF APRIL MDAC MEMBERS' MEETING

Review of 2018 legislative session and look forward

2018 Legislative Session Wrap-Up

Robyn Elliot of Public Policy Partners presented a policy update at the April 23 MDAC members' meeting.

MDAC was very active during the 2018 Maryland legislative session, resulting in the passage of key legislation to improve access to dental care.

A multi-year campaign to lay the groundwork for adult dental coverage in Medicaid resulted in the passage of SB 284, a Medicaid adult dental coverage pilot program. Changes in policy are not easy to secure, and

this was no exception. Constant advocacy efforts in both the executive and legislative branches; the passage of legislation for MDAC to study the cost of adult dental coverage (2016) and the financial impact of emergency department visits for chronic dental conditions (2017); and (3) the support of legislative champions Delegate Mike McKay and Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton resulted in the passage of SB 284.

The legislation requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to apply for a 1115 Medicaid waiver to construct a pilot program that can be focused on the dually eligible, certain age groups, and/or certain geographic areas. MDH will consult with stakeholders, including MDAC, on the structure of the pilot. The program will provide access to much-needed dental services, and lay the groundwork to expand coverage to improve health outcomes, lower the cost of chronic disease management, and reduce emergency department treatment of dental conditions.



Three other pieces of legislation passed in 2018. The governor has already signed a bill (HB 1782 and SB 387, and HB 1795 and HB 1267) which establishes a reinsurance program to lower growth in health insurance premiums. Two bills - one that requires private insurers to contract with local health departments to be in-network (HB 1132/SB 858) and one that establishes voluntary certification of community health workers (HB 490/SB 163) – passed and are awaiting the governor’s signature.

In addition, with MDAC as the lead advocate, the Maryland Insurance Administration adopted regulations around network adequacy in private dental plans, giving Maryland the strongest network adequacy requirements in the country. MDAC also worked to address the shortage of operating room time for pediatric dental surgeries on both the local and state levels.

Other legislation proposed in 2018 did not pass. A proposed new licensure category of advanced practice dental hygienist (SB 879/SB 544), amended to a task force in the House, did not move forward in the Senate. A bill that either allowed or limited dental service organization ownership of dental practices (HB 70 and SB 1256, HB 438, and HB 1726) did not move forward.



A look forward

Melissa Burroughs, Oral Health Campaign Manager at Families USA, a national healthcare consumer advocacy organization based in Washington, DC, provided a look forward to dental coverage in Medicare.

Although the U.S. population is aging rapidly, the Medicare statute currently excludes coverage for almost all oral health care, leaving two thirds of the 58 million who rely on Medicare without any dental coverage. It is difficult for many seniors to pay out-of-pocket costs for dental care on a fixed income, and those seniors who do have dental insurance often have plans that are limited and do not meet their needs.

A lack of dental coverage puts seniors at risk for tooth decay and oral disease, which can have grave health consequences for people with weakened immune systems, or those who have untreated oral health problems that make it unsafe to undergo certain medical procedures. A comprehensive Medicare oral health benefit is a needed and wise investment. A survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted in August 2017 found that 86% support including dental coverage in Medicare. The support was broad, bi-partisan, and crossed age, race and geography.

Families USA is working on Capitol Hill and through grassroots efforts to raise awareness of the need for a Medicare dental benefit. You can help, too. Contact your U.S. Senator and U.S. Representatives to make them aware of the need for a Medicare dental benefit. Start a collection of stories with oral health specific messaging, and share it with MDAC (info@mdac.us) and the [Families USA story bank](#). Also check out the Families USA resources listed in this newsletter under Access to Oral Health Care/Medicare.

JOIN THE OH2020 NETWORK

Connect with oral health stakeholders nationwide working to promote oral health

The Oral Health (OH) 2020 Network is a national network of individuals and organizations that believe oral health is essential to overall health and well-being. By focusing on early access and prevention for children, care and coverage across the lifespan, ensuring that oral health is integrated into overall healthcare, and creating a new social norm for what it means to be healthy, the OH2020 Network is building an environment in which all individuals

ORAL HEALTH FOR ALL 2020

can thrive.

Now you can connect with oral health stakeholders nationwide working to promote oral health as an essential part of overall health and well-being through Socious, a free OH2020 virtual platform that connects users to forums, resources, tools, and other members involved in oral health advocacy, service delivery, education, and more. A layered network directory allows users to search according to topic, communities served, location, and more; and an interactive online mapping tool allows users to drop "pins" to report out on their advocacy and work so like-minded partners can connect.

To join the Socious e-community, request a log-in at www.oralhealth.network, and start connecting with users across the country. Check out the [GettingStarted](#) guide for tips and tricks on setting up your profile, finding the community forums that fit your interests, and more. When you join Socious, you become part of the diverse OH2020 network of individuals and organizations at national, state, and local levels, all working to ensure policy, financing, care, and community are aligned to promote oral health as an essential part of overall health and well-being.

For more information on the Oral Health 2020 Network, [click here](#).

HEALTH PARTNERS HOSTS RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEW DENTAL SUITE Provides Much-Needed Dental Services to Western Charles County

Health Partners has provided primary care services for the rural community of Nanjemoy since January 2017, thanks to support from the Charles County Department of Health and Charles County Commissioners. Soon after establishing primary care services, Health Partners turned its attention to bringing dental services to the community.

As the saying goes, it takes a village – and with support from the Maryland Community Health Resource Commission, the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, Charles County Charitable Trust and Charles County Commissioners, Health Partners was able to build out a portion of their primary care office to create a two-chair dental suite.

Since the completion of the dental suite in February 2018, Health Partners has been providing dental services to the underserved in western Charles County. To commemorate this important milestone and celebrate those who helped make it happen, Health Partners hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 25. Maryland Senator Thomas Middleton and MDAC Executive Director Mary Backley were among those who gave congratulatory remarks.

Health Partner is grateful to the help and support of all involved who have enabled them to provide much-needed dental services to the community.

TINANOFF WINS EVIDENCE-BASED DENTISTRY SERVICE AWARD Also Presented Appreciation Award at MDAC Members' Meeting



The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry has awarded former MDAC board member Norman Tinanoff, DDS, MS, a pediatric dentist and University of Maryland School of Dentistry professor, the 2018 Evidence-Based Dentistry Service Award. The award recognizes a pediatric dentist who has made a major contribution to the dental profession and the specialty of pediatric dentistry through evidence-based clinical practice, academics or policy development over the past year.

Tinanoff was also honored at the April 23 MDAC members' meeting. MDAC Executive Director Mary Backley presented Tinanoff, a former MDAC board member, an appreciation award in recognition of "his unwavering commitment to MDAC and to improving the oral health of all Marylanders."

KLEINE NAMED TO MARYLAND'S TOP 100 WOMEN OF 2018

The Daily Record has named MDAC board member Amy Kleine an honoree of the 2018 Maryland's Top 100 Women awards. She was selected for her outstanding achievements demonstrated through professional accomplishments, community leadership, and mentoring. Kleine is the program director, housing and community services at The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

"Maryland's Top 100 Women create change and break barriers in their professional worlds but also make a difference at home and in their communities," said Suzanne Fischer-Huettner, publisher of The Daily Record. "We applaud our honorees for their passion, their commitment to excellence and for the work they do to bring communities together. The impact these women make across our state demonstrates why they are truly Maryland's Top 100 Women."



"Studies document that we make judgements about one another - including about intelligence - according to the aesthetics of teeth and mouth. People who appear to have bad oral health risk their chances of employability."

-Austin Frakt, New York Times

NEWS

[American Dental Association Announces New Policy to Combat Opioid Epidemic](#)

[Common Pain Relievers Beat Opioids for Dental Pain Relief](#)

[Uninsured Struggle to Obtain, Afford Doctor Appointments](#)

[Children's Teeth Rotting in Their Mouths Because of Sugary Foods, Say Experts](#)

[Fewer Dental Cavities Found in Young People, but Minorities Still Most at Risk](#)

ARTICLES

[CDHP: New Multi-Generational Effort for Oral Health](#)

[Prevalence of Total and Untreated Dental Caries Among Youth: United States, 2015–2016](#)

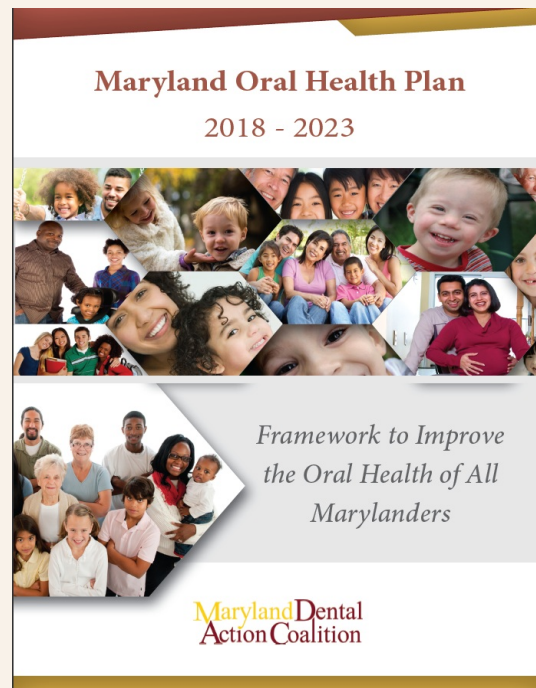
[Sex and Race or Ethnicity Disparities in Opioid Prescriptions for Dental Diagnoses Among Patients Receiving Medicaid](#)

[Getting to the Root of the Problem: Reducing Overuse of Opioids for Oral Pain](#)

[Opioid Prescribing Practices from 2010 Through 2015 Among Dentists in the United States](#)

[Benefits and Harms Associated with](#)

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:

- All Maryland children have comprehensive dental insurance coverage through public (Medicaid/MCHP) or private insurance.
- All Maryland adults have comprehensive dental insurance coverage through Medicaid or private insurance.
- All Maryland residents have a dental

[Analgesic Medications Used in the Management of Acute Dental Pain](#)

[A Culture of Racial Discrimination Is Incompatible with a Culture of Health](#)

[Racial Disparities in Emergency Department Utilization for Dental/Oral Health-Related Conditions in Maryland](#)

[Healthiest Communities Rankings Measuring Health and Wellness Across the U.S. Using 80 Metrics](#)

[What Makes Us Sick? Look Upstream](#)

[Access to Dental Care in Medicaid: Spotlight on Nonelderly Adults](#)

[Screening for Oral Cancer: A Step-by-Step Guide for Dental Hygienists](#)

[Prenatal Oral Health Counseling by Primary Care Physicians: Results of a National Survey](#)

[Brushing Your Teeth After Morning Sickness? Here's Why You Really Shouldn't](#)

[2018's Best & Worst States for Children's Health Care](#)

[Improving Children's Oral Health Through Community- and Risk-based Care](#)

[Strategies to Limit Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption in Young Children](#)

[Self-Identified Tobacco Use and Harm Perceptions Among US Youth](#)

[Exposure to Electronic Cigarette Advertising Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2014–2016](#)

[Engaging in Story-Based Work: What Oral Health Organizations Need to Know](#)

[It's All About the Base: A Guide to Building a Grassroots Organizing Program](#)

EVENTS

[Teach Me Dental: Comprehensive Health Series Part 2, April 28, 2018](#)

[NRHA Annual Rural Health Conference, May 8-11, 2018](#)

[AHEC West-GGear: Putting Our Arms Around It: Tools for Working with Complex Cases in Complex Times, June 1, 2018](#)

home.

- Strengthen the oral health safety net provider system.
- Integrate the oral health care system within the medical health care system.

Oral disease and injury prevention:

- Use data to advance optimal oral health for all Marylanders.
- Improve public awareness of oral disease and injury prevention.
- Promote community-based oral disease and injury prevention programs.

Oral health literacy and education:

- Increase understanding of the relationship between oral health and overall health, and promote good oral health practices and access to oral health care.
- Improve collaboration between oral health and other health and human services providers so that patients understand how to navigate the oral health care system and establish a dental home.
- Educate medical professionals and students about the importance of the oral/systemic connection and foster collaboration between medical and dental disciplines and communities.

[Download the plan now!](#)

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



MDAC Statewide Convening
June 18, 2018, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Turf Valley Resort
2700 Turf Valley Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

WEBINARS

[2018 OSAP Annual Conference, May 31- June 3, 2018](#)

[2018 National School-Based Health Care Convention, June 24-27, 2018](#)

[2018 Healthy Aging Summit, July 16-17, 2018](#)

[AADR Oral Health Effects of Tobacco Products: Science and Regulatory Policy, September 14, 2018](#)

[Public Health Law Conference 2018, October 4-6, 2018](#)

[American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, November 10-14, 2018](#)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

[AHEC West: Best Practices in 2018](#)

[Tooth Wisdom: Get Smart About Your Mouth](#)

[The Connections Between Periodontal Health and Systemic Well-Being](#)

[Oral Health and Autism Spectrum Disorders \(ASD\)](#)

[Smiles for Life: A National Oral Health Curriculum](#)

[Mid-Atlantic Prevent Abuse and Neglect Through Dental Awareness Dental Professional Courses](#)

[Oral Hygiene and Self-Care in Older Adults with Dementia, May 3, 2018](#)

[Health Reform: A Look Back at the 2018 General Assembly Session and Next Steps, May 11, 2018](#)

[Self-Reported Oral Health Data vs. Oral Screening Data: What's the Story?, May 17, 2018](#)

[Evaluation and Clinical Quality Assessment in Oral Health Programs: An Overview, June 15, 2018](#)

WEBCASTS

[Meeting Webcast: The Secretary's Advisory Committee for Healthy People 2030, May 14, 2018](#)

[ASTDD: Training Health Care Professionals to Focus on the Oral-Systemic Health of Older Adults](#)

[HRSA: Before You Say Ahhhh...Integrating Oral Health and Behavioral Health in Primary Care Settings](#)

[ASTDD Dental Hygienist Liaisons Webcast: Strategies to Increase the Impact of State Dental Hygienist Liaisons](#)

[Advancing Health Equity in Local Health Departments: 4-Part Webinar Series](#)



ORAL HEALTH RESOURCES

ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTH CARE

[Oral Health America: A State of Decay Vol. IV - Are Older Americans Coming of Age without Oral Healthcare?](#)

[Oral Health in America: Experiences of Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities](#)

[ADA Health Policy Institute: Oral Health Care State Facts](#)

[ASTDD: Improving Oral Health Access and](#)

ORAL DISEASE AND INJURY PREVENTION

[ASTDD: Chronic Disease and Medical/Dental Integration](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Oral Health Data Portal](#)

[Oral Health Signs of Child Maltreatment](#)

[The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General](#)

[Services for Older Adults](#)

[ADA: Championing Oral Health in Schools](#)

[OHRC Safety Net Dental Clinic Manual](#)

[Evaluation of a Comprehensive Oral Health Services Program in School-Based Health Centers](#)

[AHEC West: Screening & Management of Prediabetes & Hypertension](#)

[Health Policy Institute: Emergency Department Visits for Dental Conditions – A Snapshot](#)

[Disparities in Untreated Caries Among Children and Adults in the U.S., 2011–2014](#)

[A Funding Crisis for Public Health and Safety: State-by-State Public Health Funding and Key Health Facts 2018](#)

Medicaid

[Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits by Adults for Dental Conditions in Maryland](#)

[Hospital Visits for Dental Conditions in Maryland](#)

[Strengthening Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports in an Evolving Policy Environment: A Toolkit for States](#)

[CHCS: Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits: An Overview](#)

[Families USA: Why States Should Offer Extensive Oral Health Benefits to Adults Covered by Medicaid](#)

[Improving Access to Oral Health Care for Adults in Medicaid: Key Themes from a Policy Roundtable](#)

[Health Policy Institute: Dentist Participation in Medicaid or CHIP](#)

[Oral Health Innovation: Opportunity and Risk, Medicaid Waivers and the Keys to Good Oral Health](#)

[Families USA: Opposing Restrictive Medicaid Waivers in Your State: Advocacy Toolkit](#)

[State Medicaid Coverage for Tobacco Cessation Treatments and Barriers to Accessing Treatments — United States, 2015–2017](#)

Medicare

[The Facts on E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults](#)

[Teachers and Parents: That USB Stick Might Be an E-Cigarette \(Infographic\)](#)

[Treating Tobacco Use in Maryland: Tools for Helping Your Patients Quit](#)

[CDC: Best Practices User Guide to Health Communications in Tobacco Prevention and Control](#)

[ACP Fact Sheet: Oral Health and You](#)

[ACP Fact Sheet: Oral Health and Diabetes](#)

[ACP Fact Sheet: Oral Health and HPV](#)

[Maryland Department of Health HPV Toolkit](#)

[AAP HPV Champion Toolkit](#)

[Stem the Tide: Addressing the Opioid Epidemic](#)

[Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain](#)

[Don't Be Scammed by a Drug Abuser](#)

[ACP Fact Sheet: Oral Health and Older Adults](#)

[ASTDD: Silver Diamine Fluoride Fact Sheet](#)

[Drink Up! Fluoridated Water Helps Fight Decay](#)

ORAL HEALTH LITERACY AND EDUCATION

[ASTDD: Oral Health Educational Resources for Home Visitors and Families: Environmental Scan](#)

[Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: Practice Guidance for Maryland's Prenatal and Dental Providers](#)

[Understanding the Mouth and Body Connection: How Your Oral Health Affects Your General Health](#)

[2 Minutes With Your Dentist Can Save Your Life](#)

[Healthy Teeth, Healthy Kids](#)

[Promoting Oral Health in Young Children: A Resource Guide](#)

[Dental Care And Medicare Beneficiaries: Access Gaps, Cost Burdens, And Policy Options](#)

[Families USA: America's Seniors Need Medicare Oral Health Coverage](#)

[Families USA: Medicare Should Pay for Oral Health Care That Is Necessary to Manage Serious Illnesses](#)

[Oral Health America Medicare Dental Toolkit](#)

Policy

[State Legislators: Who They Are and How to Work with Them - A Guide for Oral Health Professionals](#)

[Legislative Priorities of Oral Health America](#)

[Oral Health 2020: Reframing Oral Health: A Communications Toolkit for Advancing Oral Health Reform](#)

[Oral Health 2020: Unlocking the Door to New Thinking: Frames for Advancing Oral Health Reform](#)

[Oral Health 2020 National Policy Landscape Resources](#)

[Oral Health Books for Children](#)

[Brush, Book and Bed Implementation Guide](#)

[Teaching Children to Think Mouth, Think Health](#)

[School-Based Health Alliance School Oral Health Resource Library](#)

[Healthy Mouths for You and Your Baby](#)

[Brush Up on Oral Health: Child Maltreatment](#)

[Brush Up on Oral Health: Water and Health](#)

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

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

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

[Maryland State Legislators](#)

RURAL HEALTH

[MRHA Maryland Rural Health Plan](#)

[Compendium of Rural Oral Health Best Practices](#)

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**](http://www.mdac.us)

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