



## Maryland Community Health System

**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill:** House Bill 103 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Dental Services - Coverage and Rate Study

**Hearing Date:** February 13, 2024

**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 103 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Services – Coverage and Rate Study*. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Health to study the feasibility of covering full and partial dentures in the Medicaid program.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers that provide somatic, behavioral, and oral health services to underserved communities. We have served thousands of dental patients in the newly established Medicaid Adult Dental Program. This program was established by 2022 legislation - HB 6/SB 150 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults (Delegates Cullison and McKay/Senators Augustine and Guzzone).

MCHS is very appreciative of the partnership of the Maryland Department of Health in implementing the Medicaid Adult Dental Program. As of January 2024, the Program has served nearly 176,000 adults. Our health centers are finding that some of these individuals have severe dental problems, as they may not have had coverage for an extended period of time. Some have lost their teeth (edentulism) as a result. If the Program could be extended to provide coverage for dentures, these patients would benefit tremendously. Edentulism can result in negative impact on an individual’s health, including behavioral health.<sup>1</sup> It can an individual’s ability to interact socially, thereby resulting in difficulty in finding employment.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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