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Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 551 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Coverage and Reimbursement of Telehealth

Hearing Date: February 10, 2021

Position: Support with Technical Amendment

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) strongly supports *House Bill 551 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Coverage and Reimbursement of Telehealth*. The bill recognizes that telehealth can improve access to all types of services. We request one technical amendment to add dental to the Medicaid definition of telehealth, as this is consistent with Medicaid’s current policy:

On page 6 in line 31 insert “, DENTAL,” after “SOMATIC”

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Maryland Medical Assistance Program has reimbursed for tele-dentistry using a procedure code established by the American Dental Association. Medicaid covers dental services for all enrolled children, dually eligible adults under the age of 65, and pregnant women. This summer, Medicaid is expected to add postpartum dental coverage.

Through telehealth during the pandemic, dentists have been able to provide remote consultations and then follow-up with in-person services as necessary. The pandemic will accelerate the implementation of telehealth to address access issues by:

- Connecting patients in remote areas to specialists. This is particular critical in rural areas;
- Providing emergency consults and diverting patients from emergency rooms; and
- Allowing dentist to provide consults to patients who face mobility and transportation issues.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders