

SUSAN W. KREBS
Legislative District 5
Carroll County

Health and Government
Operations Committee

Government Operations and Estates
and Trusts Subcommittee

Health Facilities and
Pharmaceuticals Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 203
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3200 · 301-858-3200
800-492-7122 Ext. 3200
Fax 410-841-3349 · 301-858-3349
Susan.Krebs@house.state.md.us

The Maryland House of Delegates

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Health and Government Operations

HB710 Maryland Medical Assistance Programs - Dental Providers and Dental Students- Reimbursements

February 9, 2021

WHAT DOES THIS BILL DO?

This bill is an innovative and low-cost way to build up the Medicaid provider network by exposing students to Medicaid care and settings early in their career development.

It requires Medicaid to reimburse a dental provider for services rendered by a student of dentistry who is engaged in a qualifying educational program at a school of dentistry and providing services under the supervision of a licensed dentist.

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THE BILL?

It is difficult to attract new dentists to Medicaid service due to lower reimbursement rates, low patient show rates, and stricter accreditation and administration requirements. This has only gotten worse during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the increased cost of unreimbursed personal protective equipment (PPE), even lower patient show rates, and reduced services to allow for new public health protocols. The number of practitioners seeking to provide Medicaid care is *decreasing* while the economic crisis and lack of access to dental care through alternative settings like schools and Head Start programs are *increasing* the number of patients seeking care.

By opening for the door for students to participate through internships at dental practices that specialize in Medicaid,

- Helps increase exposure to Medicaid services for dental students
- Incentivizes those students to go on to careers that serve those same populations

Because the vast majority of Medicaid dental patients in Maryland are children, it also increases student exposure to pediatric services.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES NOT DO?

- It does not alter or expand the scope of practice for dental students in any way. The Health Occupations Article 4-301(1)(b) already permits dental students to practice dentistry without a license, and this bill would not permit a student to provide any services they are not already permitted to provide under the dental practice act. This bill deals solely with Medicaid's reimbursement for those services.
- It does not increase the amount or cost of Medicaid services, but rather allows Medicaid-based practices to utilize student externs to assist with the services they are already providing.
- It does not require any dental school, dental practice or dental student to participate in an externship program. It simply opens the door for these parties to develop a program that encompasses Medicaid patients.
- It does not dictate the terms or requirements for any future dental externship program in Maryland.

I understand that some may have concerns about what an externship in a private practice or a Medicaid practice might look like, but as the bill stands, it is simply seeking to remove this one barrier, and leave the development of these programs to the stakeholders that take part in them, including dental schools, dentists, students, state regulators, and any other appropriate participants.

I urge the Committee to favorably report HB710