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Support**HB219: Dental Hygienists-Consultation Requirements-Health Care Practitioners**

February 1, 2022

The Maryland Academy of Advanced Practice Clinicians supports passage of Delegate Ariana Kelly HB219: Dental Hygienists-Consultation Requirements-Health Care Practitioners.

Dental Hygienists are highly educated professionals who provide essential oral health services to patients throughout the life span.

Data has shown that good oral hygiene can prevent development of serious chronic diseases such as heart disease and possibly Alzheimer's and can help prevent worsening of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cerebral vascular disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and diabetes. Dental hygienists provide excellent preventative care and are often the entry point for patients to obtain much needed dental care.

Access to care in Maryland has been a long-standing issue and expanding locations where patients can access essential services is critical to improving population health. Currently, Maryland law only allows dental hygienists to provide services in settings where there is a physician or dentist.

This bill will expand locations where a dental hygienist may provide services to offices in which there is a nurse practitioner, certified nurse midwife or licensed certified midwife, thus increasing access to care for vulnerable populations in Maryland, particularly rural areas, and inner cities. Patients have a high degree of trust and confidence in their providers and are more likely to access preventative dental services if the surroundings are familiar and convenient for the patient.

We urge a favorable report on this bill. If you need further information, please contact me at LDianaart@aol.com.

Sincerely,
Lorraine Diana, CRNP
MAAPC Legislative Co-Chair