



Restore \$1M Funding to the State’s Designated Patient Safety Center

A State Responsibility & Designation

In statute, the State of Maryland, through the Maryland Health Care Commission, designates a Patient Safety Center to lead systemwide improvement in healthcare safety. That designated center is the Maryland Patient Safety Center (MPSC). With this designation comes a public responsibility—and a clear rationale for sustained state investment. Although MPSC is an independent nonprofit, it is the state’s official convener for learning, improvement, and harm prevention across Maryland healthcare.

Safe care does not happen by accident: we help prevent harm before it happens. From reducing preventable infections to improving care during childbirth, our work helps prevent avoidable harm. It’s hard to measure what doesn’t happen—but the saving in lives, health and cost are real.

Why the State Must Fund This Work

Hospitals play a critical role in improving care, but statewide safety infrastructure exists to serve the public good. Relying solely on hospitals to fund a statewide safety center is akin to expecting airlines alone to fund the FAA or NTSB. Patient safety is a shared public interest: Marylanders expect safe care regardless of geography or care setting, and ensuring that consistency is a state-level obligation.

When safety infrastructure is funded only by hospitals, smaller or rural institutions—and non-hospital settings such as urgent care, assisted living, and nursing homes—risk being left behind. State funding ensures equity, access, and accountability. Moreover, the benefits of improved safety—reduced Medicaid spending, better outcomes, and workforce retention—accrue to the state as a whole, not just individual hospitals.

How the State Gets Value from Its Investment

- ✓ **Return on Investment:** MPSC reduces avoidable harm, lowering Medicaid and system-wide costs by decreasing complications, hospitalizations, lengths of stay, readmissions, emergency department use, and post-acute care. These savings extend across Medicaid, state employee health plans, and uncompensated care.
- ✓ **Trust and Confidence in Maryland Healthcare:** MPSC strengthens public trust through prevention, reinforcing the infrastructure that supports safe, high-quality care statewide—before crises occur.
- ✓ **Equity and Statewide Reach:** MPSC serves all Maryland hospitals, ensuring consistent safety standards across large systems and smaller, rural institutions alike.

A Proven Model: Like the NTSB, But for Healthcare

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigates accidents to improve transportation systems through protected, non-punitive learning.

MPSC serves a comparable role in healthcare. As a federally listed Patient Safety Organization, MPSC provides legally protected environments for healthcare organizations to learn from adverse events and near misses—improving systems without blame or litigation. This trusted convening function is essential state infrastructure.

NTSB’s recommendations prevent future accidents, saving lives and taxpayer dollars. MPSC’s programs (on falls, maternal morbidity, medication safety, etc.) reduce costly preventable harm—generating **return on investment** across Medicaid, state employee health plans, and uncompensated care.

State funding for MPSC yields cost savings far greater than the appropriation. Just like NTSB reports, MPSC findings translate to **systemic efficiencies** and long-term public benefit.

Our Ask

Restore and sustain **\$1 million in annual state funding** for the nonprofit Maryland Patient Safety Center, the state’s designated patient safety center. This investment ensures equitable access to safety infrastructure, protects healthcare workers, reduces Medicaid and state employee health plan costs, and keeps Marylanders safe—demonstrating a proactive, bipartisan commitment to public well-being.



Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly:

As leaders of quality and patient safety across Maryland’s health systems, we urge you to restore **\$1 million in the FY27 state budget for the Maryland Patient Safety Center (MPSC).**

Every day, hospitals work tirelessly to prevent harm, but some risks cannot be solved by any one institution. Recently, portable oxygen tanks were depleting during patient transport—a deadly situation. Because of MPSC, that lesson was rapidly shared statewide, and hospitals collectively identified and shared improvements, and engaged manufacturers to address the problem. Without this infrastructure, the same failure could have harmed patients again and again in different Maryland hospitals.

MPSC functions like an “NTSB” for healthcare. Just as the federal government funds the NTSB to identify patterns across airlines and railroads, Maryland needs MPSC to detect and prevent repeat events across hospitals, nursing homes, and urgent care centers. This work saves lives and avoids costs—each prevented adverse event (such as an infection, readmission, or surgical complication) can save \$20,000–\$50,000 or more. Preventing even a handful of these incidents annually offsets the entire state investment.

Maryland already funds prevention in other areas of public life—fire safety, car theft, highway patrol—because the public deserves protection from predictable harms. Patient safety is no different. It is a shared public good that requires a modest, reliable state investment to ensure every Marylander benefits, no matter where they receive care.

For the State, patient safety is not only a moral obligation but a fiscal imperative. Preventable harm drives higher Medicaid costs, increases state employee health plan expenditures, and reduces workforce productivity. By preventing adverse events, MPSC reduces avoidable state spending and strengthens Maryland’s healthcare system for all.

The requested \$1 million is small compared to the cost of preventable harm, but its impact is profound: fewer tragedies, faster learning, and measurable taxpayer savings. It is both the right thing to do for Maryland families and the smart thing to do for Maryland’s budget.

We respectfully urge your support for restoring and maintaining this critical funding in FY27.

Sincerely,

Terry Fairbanks, MD, MS
MedStar Health
Senior Vice President and Chief Quality and Safety Officer
Executive Director, MedStar Institute for Quality and Safety
Professor, Georgetown University

Deneen Richmond
Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center
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January 12, 2026

Maryland General Assembly
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Support for Maryland Patient Safety Center Budget Request

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly:

On behalf of AARP Maryland and its 850,000 members, I am writing to express strong support for the Maryland Patient Safety Center (MPSC). MPSC's mission is to improve patient safety across all aspects of healthcare in Maryland and the surrounding region. Its mission—*Keeping Maryland Healthcare Safe*—is critical to ensuring high-quality, equitable care for all Marylanders, and particularly those age 50 and older.

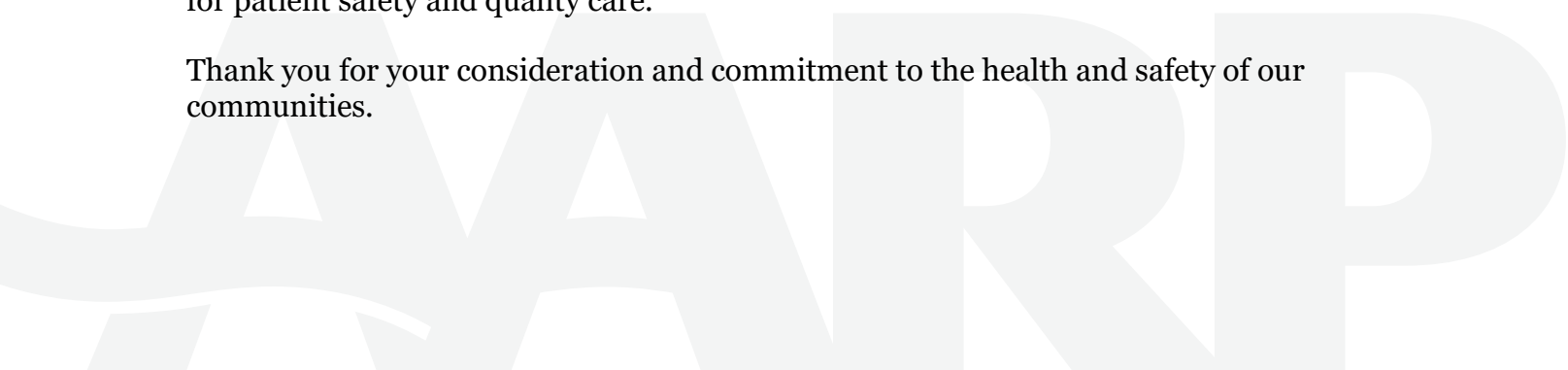
For over seventeen years, MPSC has partnered with hospitals, physicians, long-term care providers, and patients to implement innovative strategies that prevent avoidable harm. Through statewide initiatives such as education, training, and fostering a culture of safety, MPSC has driven measurable improvements in patient outcomes.

Recent conferences hosted by MPSC have engaged hundreds of healthcare professionals, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the continuum of care. These programs are essential to Maryland's Total Cost of Care Model, which depends on continuous improvement in safety and quality to achieve better outcomes and reduce costs.

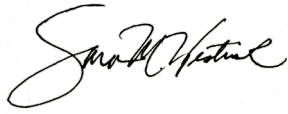
MPSC's work is not only vital for patient safety but also for maintaining Maryland's leadership in healthcare innovation. Continued investment will allow MPSC to expand its reach, strengthen partnerships with key health policy agencies, and provide coaching to healthcare facilities statewide.

I urge you to continue to support the Maryland Patient Safety Center with the resources required to do its essential work. Doing so will ensure that Maryland remains a model for patient safety and quality care.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to the health and safety of our communities.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara M. Westrick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sara" being the most prominent.

Sara M. Westrick
Advocacy Director
AARP Maryland

cc: Hank Greenberg, State Director, AARP Maryland