

Written Testimony in Support of SB 150
Maryland Medical Assistance Program-Dental Coverage for Adults
Diane Romaine DMD MScM MAGD
Favorable

Dear Senate Finance Committee

A July 2012 research report by Care Quest Institute for Oral Health titled, "Financial Impact of Emergency Department Visits for Dental Conditions in Maryland", shows that:

- 1) Maryland Medicaid enrolled adults have a disproportionate share of ED visits for non-traumatic dental conditions.
- 2) Maryland's rates of Medicaid recipients visiting the ED for non-traumatic dental conditions are significantly higher than the national average
- 3) Maryland is one of 3 states in the US that provide no adult dental Medicaid benefit.
- 4) Providing an adult dental benefit to Maryland Medicaid recipients will reduce ED visits and spending by providing access to definitive dental care in more cost-effective settings such as dental offices and community health centers.

In addition, a 2021 study in the Journal of Public Health Dentistry shows that when adults gain dental coverage through Medicaid, their job prospects improve.

Finally, a 2018 Dentaquest study showed that 15 Maryland adults died after presenting to Maryland EDs for non-traumatic dental visits from 2013-2016.

To be healthy a person must have good oral health as well, and many of our lowest income adults in Maryland simply cannot afford to achieve health because dental benefits are not included in their Medicaid benefits as they are in 48 other states across the US.

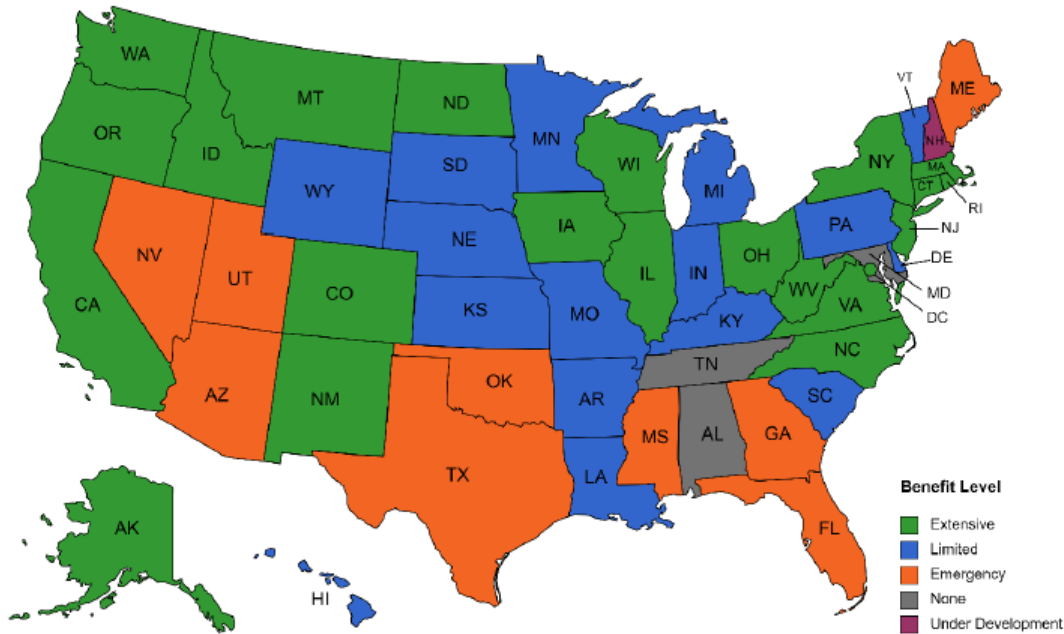
I know as Marylanders who value the wellbeing of our most vulnerable adults we can do better.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this data to you. I ask for a favorable report on SB 150.

Sincerely,

Diane Romaine DMD MScM MAGD

The Current Landscape



Source: Health Policy Institute analysis of data from Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc.¹⁸ Authors have updated the analysis with data as of early 2021. **Note:** None = No coverage. Emergency-only = Coverage for pain relief under defined emergency situations. Limited = Coverage for a subset of diagnostic, preventive, and minor restorative procedures with a per-enrollee annual maximum expenditure of \$1,000 or less. Extensive = Coverage for a more comprehensive mix of services, including at least 100 diagnostic, preventive, and restorative procedures, and a per-enrollee annual maximum expenditure of at least \$1,000.

As of 2021...

21 states provide extensive adult dental benefits in their Medicaid programs.

16 states provide limited benefits,

9 provide emergency-only benefits,

3 provide no benefits, and

1 has a dental benefit under development.

Oral Health Access and Equity

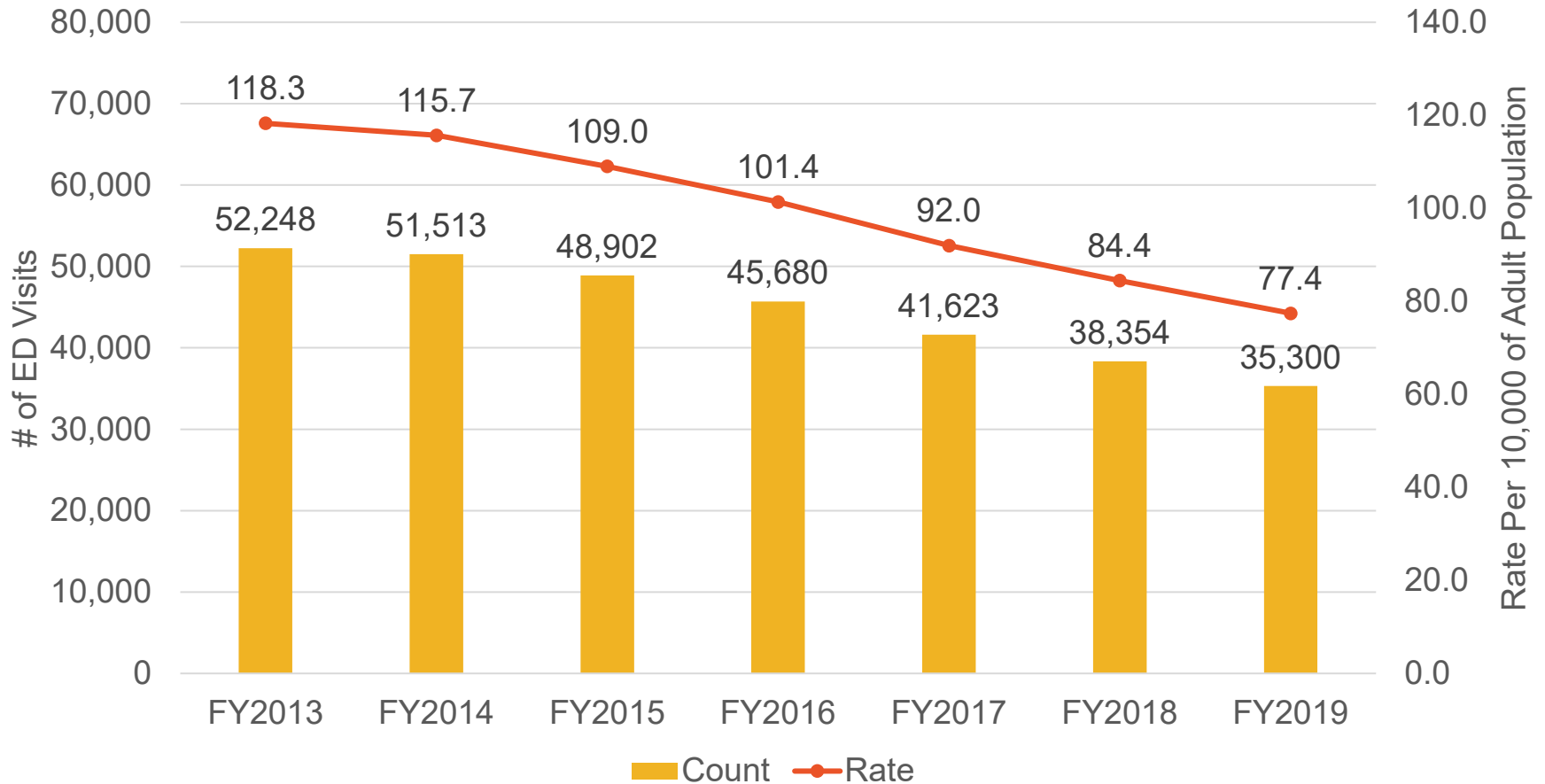
Maryland Oral Health Task Force

Eric P. Tranby, PhD
Manager, Data & Impact

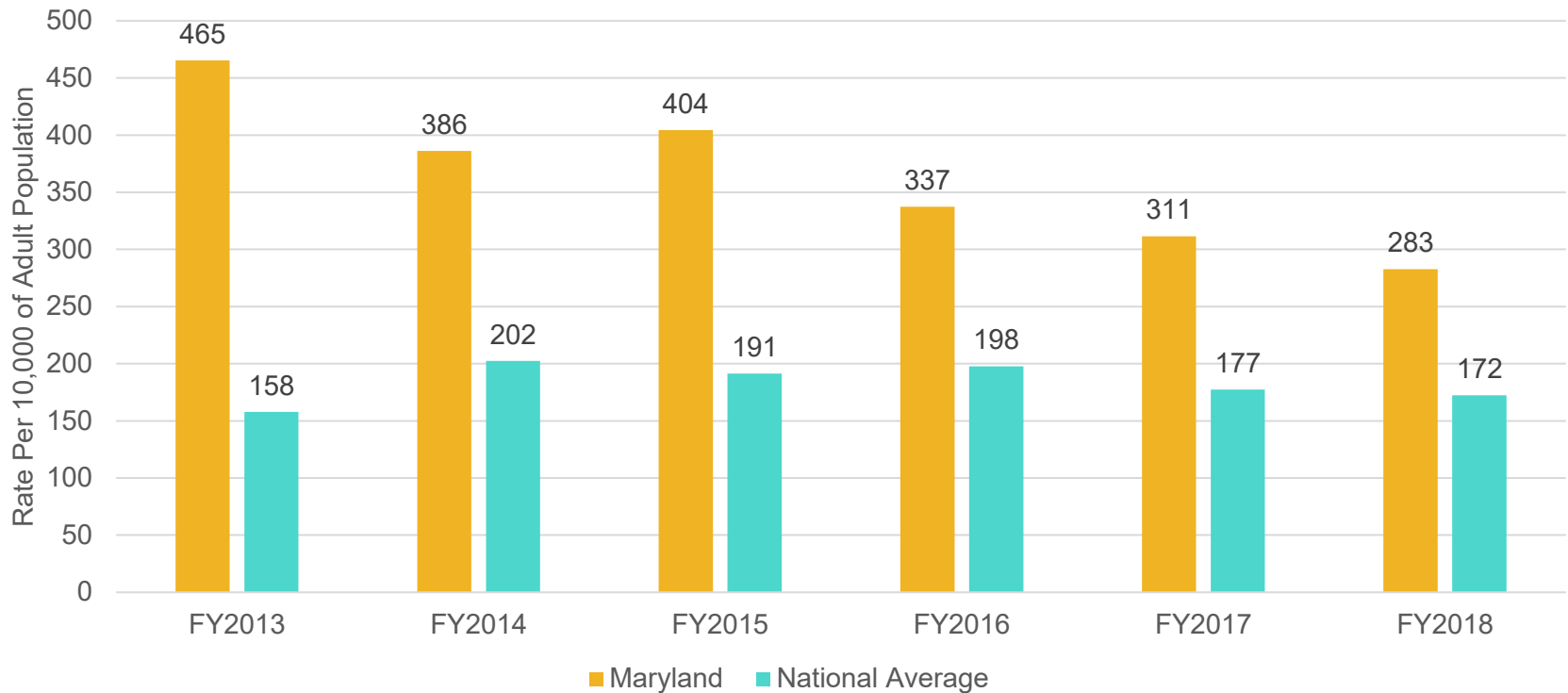
December 16, 2021



Trends in ED Visits for NTDC in Maryland



Rates for ED Visits for NTDC Among Medicaid Participants in Maryland and Nationally



Disproportionate Share of ED Visits for NTDC by Medicaid Enrolled Adults in Maryland

