



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ motamembers.org

Committee:	House Health and Government Operations Committee
Bill Number:	House Bill 6
Title:	Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Adult Dental Coverage
Hearing Date:	February 9, 2021
Position:	Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) is in strong support of *House Bill 6 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Adult Dental*. The bill establishes dental benefits for adults who participate in the Medicaid Program.

Occupational therapy practitioners provide patient-centered care. We want our clients to be empowered, working with their clinical providers, to live their lives as independently as possible. Our clients face obstacles because they are coping with serious illnesses, disabilities, or recovering from injuries. If they are adults with Medicaid, their clinical progress can be impeded by the lack of even the most basic dental care. For example, clients who are coping with cancer may have to wait to have surgery until their dental problems are resolved. Tooth or gum infections pose a serious risk to patients undergoing surgery. However, it can be very challenging to obtain this care, as most Maryland adult participants in Medicaid do not have dental coverage.

Maryland is one of only three states, alongside Alabama and Tennessee, that do not provide systemic dental coverage for adult in Medicaid. As a state, we are so far along in focusing our health care system on prevention with our Total Cost of Care Model, yet we are almost last in regards to providing dental coverage for adults in Medicaid. It is time to change this inequity. We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.