



## Maryland Community Health System

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| <b>Committee:</b>    | <b>House Health and Government Operations Committee</b>  |
| <b>Bill Number:</b>  | <b>HB 786 - Health Occupations – Limited License to Practice Dentistry – Services for Adults</b> |
| <b>Hearing Date:</b> | <b>February 13, 2024</b>   |
| <b>Position:</b>     | <b>Support</b>   |

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The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 786 - Health Occupations – Limited License to Practice Dentistry – Services for Adults*. This bill recognizes that federally qualified health centers and local health departments are providing dental services to adults.

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) is a network of federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) that serve underserved communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas across Maryland. Our health centers have been the backbone of the provider system that serves the uninsured and Medicaid participants. They serve any individual who needs service, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Internationally trained dentists are an important part of our dental team, especially with the dental provider shortage. As these dentists are also often bilanguage or trilingual, they also help us meet the needs of our non-English speaking patients.

Internationally trained dentists have to follow a specific statutory path to obtain licenses in Maryland. As part of their pathway, they must work for two-years at an FQHC or local health department under a limited license. The statute specifies that their work is with pediatric patients. The bill proposes making it clearer that dentist with limited licenses can also serve adults. This change would align the law with how federal qualified health centers serve both children and adults.

We request a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).