

Chapter 721

(Senate Bill 169)

AN ACT concerning

**Maryland Medical Assistance Program Health – Cost of Emergency Room Visits
to Treat Dental Conditions and Coverage of Dental Services Under Medicaid –
Study**

FOR the purpose of ~~requiring~~ authorizing the ~~Department of Health and Mental Hygiene~~ Maryland Dental Action Coalition to conduct a study to determine the annual cost of emergency room visits to treat dental conditions of ~~adult enrollees in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program~~ certain adults *and whether it is advisable to expand benefits for dental services for certain adults under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program*; ~~requiring~~ authorizing the ~~Department~~ Coalition to conduct the study in a certain manner, report the findings of the study to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the General Assembly on or before a certain date, and distribute the report to certain stakeholders or a certain coalition of stakeholders; *authorizing the Program, under certain circumstances, to provide dental services for certain adults beginning on a certain date and subject to certain limitations; making certain provisions of this Act subject to a certain contingency*; and generally relating to ~~the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and a study of the cost of~~ emergency room visits to treat dental conditions and the advisability of expanding benefits for dental services under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Health – General

Section 15–103(a)(1)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Health – General

Section 15–103(a)(2)(xi) and (xii)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Health – General

Section 15–103(a)(2)(xiii)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

That:

(a) ~~The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall~~ Maryland Dental Action Coalition may conduct a study to determine:

~~(1) the annual cost of emergency room visits to treat dental conditions of adult enrollees in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program;~~

~~(1)~~ (i) adult enrollees in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program;

~~(2)~~ (ii) adults who have private health insurance coverage; and

~~(3)~~ (iii) adults who are uninsured; and

(2) whether it is advisable to expand the benefits provided under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to include dental services for adults whose annual household income is at or below 133 percent of the poverty level.

(b) In conducting the study ~~required~~ authorized under subsection (a) of this section, the ~~Department shall~~ Coalition may:

(1) use emergency room utilization data from the Health Services Cost Review Commission to determine for ~~adult Medical Assistance enrollees~~ the categories of individuals specified in subsection (a) of this section:

(i) the annual cost of emergency room visits for dental health care treatment for all dental conditions by zip code and county; and

(ii) the annual cost of emergency room visits for dental health care treatment for chronic dental conditions by zip code and county;

(2) evaluate whether there may be underreporting of dental-related diagnoses in the emergency room utilization data from the Health Services Cost Review Commission; and

(3) identify methods to improve the reporting and analysis of the data relating to utilization of emergency rooms for treatment of dental conditions.

(c) (1) On or before December 1, 2017, the ~~Department shall~~ Coalition may report to the ~~General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the General Assembly~~ the findings of the study conducted under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) The ~~Department shall~~ Coalition may distribute the report to any local stakeholders, or coalition of stakeholders, with an interest in using the emergency room data for their region of the State to improve access to dental services ~~for adult enrollees in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Health – General

15–103.

(a) (1) The Secretary shall administer the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

(2) The Program:

(xi) May include bedside nursing care for eligible Program recipients;
[and]

(xii) Shall provide services in accordance with funding restrictions included in the annual State budget bill; AND

(XIII) BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2019, MAY PROVIDE, SUBJECT TO THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STATE BUDGET, AND AS PERMITTED BY FEDERAL LAW, DENTAL SERVICES FOR ADULTS WHOSE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME IS AT OR BELOW 133 PERCENT OF THE POVERTY LEVEL.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) Section 2 of this Act is contingent on the Maryland Dental Action Coalition determining, as part of the findings of the study authorized under Section 1(a) of this Act, that it is advisable to expand the benefits provided under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to include dental services for adults whose annual household income is at or below 133 percent of the poverty level.

(b) If the report authorized under Section 1(c)(1) of this Act does not include the finding described in subsection (a) of this section, Section 2 of this Act shall be null and void without the necessity of further action by the General Assembly.

SECTION ~~2~~ 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to Section 3 of this Act, this Act shall take effect June 1, 2017.

Approved by the Governor, May 25, 2017.