

New York State Dental Association

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My name is Briana McNamee. I am the new Director of Governmental Affairs with the New York State Dental Association.

Founded in 1868, the New York State Dental Association is dedicated to serving dental professionals, dental auxiliaries and members of the general public. NYSDA promotes the public's health through its member dentists' commitment to provide quality dental care - accessible to everyone - and holds membership to be the foundation of successful practice. At present, our Association has over 12,000 members – comprised of students, residents, newly licensed dentists, practioners and, retired dental professionals.

Workforce

As the needs of our communities and patients evolve, the field of dentistry must as well. Expanding how, where and what dentists, as licensed medical professions, treat will positively impact the overall health of New Yorkers.

Ordering and Administering Diagnostic Tests

Part W, Section 10 of the Health & Mental Hygiene (AB 3007 / SB 4007) would amend the practice of dentistry to allow for ordering and administering Hepatitis-C and HIV screening or diagnostic tests approved pursuant to federal requirements. This change to the dental scope of practice law expands the list of eligible providers, increases access to care, provides early intervention resulting in positive health outcomes, and decreases cost to both the patient and licensed medical professionals.

There are several other screening and/or diagnostic tests that NYSDA believes would have a broad, beneficial impact for the patients licensed dental providers treat, if they were made through SoP including *HbA-1c and the coronavirus*.

Glycated hemoglobin (HbA-1c) reflects the average plasma glucose over a 2-3 month period. It can be performed at any time of the day and does not require any special preparation such as fasting. Given the minimal preparation demands, HbA-1c has become the preferred diagnostic test for diabetes and as a screening test for persons at high risk of diabetes, by medical professionals.

As such, we respectfully request expanding the above referenced section to: Hepatitis C, HIV, HBA-1c and coronavirus.

Doctors Across New York

Doctors Across New York is a state funded initiative enacted in 2008 to help train and place physicians in underserved communities in a variety of settings and specialties to care for New York's diverse population. Included within the Executive Budget proposal was an extension for the initiative through March 31, 2026. The New York State Dental Association encourages the Legislature to expand DANY to include dentists, as drafted within S4334/A1454.

Patient Care

Access to dental care is essential for both oral and overall health.

Dental patients present with a variety of dental benefits plans, including managed care, self-funded benefits, Medicare, No-Fault or Workers Compensation and, Medicaid and SCHIP.

Essential Plan/1332 State Innovation Health Plan Program

The Governor's proposed Article VII, Health and Mental Hygiene included the creation of a 1332 State Innovation Health Plan Program as authorized by the ACA. This would extend the Essential Plan to additional populations and ensure that dental benefits are included in the benefit package.

The New York State Dental Association supports this transition and looks forward to continuing care for New Yorkers of all ages and abilities.

Medicaid Preventative Care

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) administers the Medicaid program. Enrolled patients can seek care from any dentist who is a Medicaid provider. Unfortunately, Medicaid rates for dental services have been notoriously low, creating significant access issues. As such, NYSDA supports:

- Increasing reimbursement rates for dental services to ensure access for all Medicaid members;

Access to dental care for the intellectually and developmentally disabled (IDD) community has become increasingly challenging over the last two decades statewide. With strategic investments, our State's most vulnerable community members can receive the dental care they need and deserve. The New York State Dental Association supports:

- Increasing Medicaid reimbursement for private practice dentists serving the IDD population; and
- Increasing reimbursement for ambulatory surgery dental services for the IDD population

Medical Loss Ratio

Medical Loss Ratio (MLR) is the minimum percentage of all premium funds collected by an insurer each year that must be spent on patient care. This minimum required percentage must be dedicated to patient care rather than administrative and overhead costs or the difference must be refunded to individuals and groups in the form of rebate.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires a minimum ratio for medical plans, however, no such requirement exists for dental plans, which are considered "excepted benefits." Patients seeking to

maximize the value of the dental coverage they purchase would benefit from laws ensuring their premiums are invested in the care they receive.

While we commend the Governor for proposing an increase to Mainstream Managed Care Plans' MLR and Managed Long Term Care Plans' MLR, we urge the legislature to consider extending the 89% ratio to include dental-specific plans. In addition, NYSDA supports requiring that dental benefit plan providers file a comprehensive MLR report annually.

Community Relations

Dental Demonstration Project

The Dental Demonstration Project (DDP) was created in 2015 to improve oral health outcomes in underserved populations across New York State. Through one-day service events and community outreach, the DDP strives to close the gap on unmet dental needs, improve health literacy, connect patients to a dental home and link families to resources in their local community.

By including a reallocation within the Aid to Localities bill, remaining funds from FY2023 will be utilized entirely. The New York State Dental Association urges the Legislature to invest an additional \$125,000 for continuation of programs and community services in 2024.

Dental Grant Program

Advanced training for general dentists in Special Needs Dentistry is required to increase the number of practitioners with the specialized skillset, competence, and compassion to treat the nearly 60,000 individuals in our State with IDD. These individuals present with adverse and resistive behaviors to dental care and cannot be treated by community dentists.

The Dental Grant Program was established in 2022 with monies in the final budget. The Program, administered through the State Education Department, provides funding to teach students, attending an accredited dental program in New York State, to work with individuals with disabilities.

Our Association encourages the legislature to include a re-appropriation for the program in the amount of \$750,000.

I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to discussing the aforementioned proposals over the coming weeks.

“A leading health indicator to achieve overall health is to increase the percentage of Americans who access the oral health system”.

Dr. Tim Ricks, Assistant Surgeon General