



The Maryland State Medical Society

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AS HEART HEALTH MONTH COMES TO AN END MEDCHI SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO INCREASE SMOKING AGE TO 21

BALTIMORE, February 27, 2019 — Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. MedChi is proudly participating in American Heart Month in order to help prevent heart disease and increase awareness of its effects.

Smoking and using tobacco products are big contributors to heart disease and a big public health issue. MedChi, along with the American Heart Association, are strong supporters of Maryland becoming the next state to raise its smoking age to 21, which includes being able to purchase tobacco products, as new data shows tobacco use among teens is on the rise. To date, six states have passed similar legislation including California, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Oregon, Hawaii and Maine, according to tobacco21.org. Advocates of this legislation met with legislators and participated in hearings this week in support of Senate Bill 895 which would alter the minimum age for an individual to purchase or be sold tobacco products.

Dr. Benjamin Stallings, President of MedChi, states “The biggest part of living healthy comes down to simply making healthy choices, even small changes to your diet and lifestyle can improve your heart health and lower your risk. Raising the age to purchase tobacco products would save lives, reduce health care costs, and help fight addiction.”

Smoking is one of many conditions and behaviors that can lead to heart disease. High blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, obesity, diabetes, physical inactivity, unhealthy eating patterns, and smoking can all affect someone’s heart health. Staying physically active, eating healthy, and not engaging in smoking or frequent intake of alcoholic beverages can all help manage a person’s health and lessen their chance for heart disease.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland’s foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.