



The Maryland State Medical Society

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STATE WIDE POLL SHOWS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR PAYMENT PARITY

BALTIMORE, February 28, 2018 — MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, has long supported the idea that Maryland Medicaid payments should equal Medicare payments, the results from a recent poll show that Marylanders agree. In February, using a statewide Maryland voter poll, MedChi asked: *“In Maryland, Medicaid, which covers mostly poor people, pays health care practitioners less for their services than Medicare, which covers mostly seniors and the disabled. Do you feel Medicaid should or should not pay doctors and nurses who treat the poor the same amount that Medicare pays them to treat seniors and the disabled?”*

Those interviewed were randomly selected from a phone-matched Maryland voter registration list that included both land-line and cell phone numbers. All participants reported that they regularly vote in state elections. Overall, 73% of participants felt that doctors and nurses who treat the poor should be paid equally for services provided to Medicaid and Medicare patients. Only 15% of participants believed that physicians and nurses should not be paid the same equally. Deeper breakdowns of the results show that participants from Baltimore City (82%), Prince George’s County (81%), and Montgomery County (76%) had the highest support for payment parity.

MedChi President-elect Ben Stallings, MD explained, “As a specialist in Prince George’s County who sees Medicaid patients, the results make sense. Marylanders understand that we need fair Medicaid payments to ensure an adequate provider network for patients.”

MedChi has long argued that low Medicaid payments negatively affect access to medically necessary services. Lower Medicaid payments affect not only access to primary care providers, but also access to specialty services. Medicaid payment increases for all physicians, regardless of specialty, will encourage private practice physicians *and* employed and hospital-based physicians, who care for many Medicaid patients, often in emergency situations, to participate in the Medicaid program.

MedChi has continuously advocated for restoration of funding to full Medicare parity over the years. MedChi is pleased that this poll shows an overwhelming support from Maryland residents for payment parity.

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.