



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

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## **MEDCHI RELEASES 2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

BALTIMORE, December 5, 2022 – As the statewide professional association for licensed physicians, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is dedicated to our mission to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients, and the public health. MedChi intends to tackle a wide range of objectives for the 2023 General Assembly Session that are in line with this mission.

MedChi will uphold its commitment to protect access to physician services and the practice of medicine. James York, M.D., MedChi's Board President, states: "MedChi's legislative advocacy priorities focus on improving quality of life for physicians and quality of care for patients, including reducing administrative burdens caused by utilization management techniques, ensuring fair insurance contracting, preserve access to care by physicians, and advocating for programs to allow all Marylanders to have broad access to health care coverage."

Among the issues that MedChi follows, the list below will be top priorities in 2023:

### **ENSURE TIMELY DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE AND PAYMENT**

- Advocate for initiatives that streamline and reform utilization management policies (i.e., prior authorization and step therapy laws) in both the commercial market and in Medicaid to reduce administrative burdens and increase transparency.
- Ensure that physicians and other health care practitioners are not inappropriately excluded from participating on insurance panels.
- Advocate that the Fiscal Year 2024 Medicaid budget maintain E&M reimbursement rates to 100% of Medicare to support physician participation in the program.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to create fair and appropriate policies and procedures for Medicaid payment seizures.

### **PROTECT ACCESS TO PHYSICIAN SERVICES AND THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE**

- Oppose policies that would adversely affect patient care by inappropriately expanding the scope of practice of non-physician providers beyond their education and training, including the ability to diagnose, treat, prescribe medications and/or manage medical disorders.
- Seek State funding for the MD Loan Assistance Repayment Program, which provides loan repayment to primary care physicians working in underserved areas

- Fight initiatives to weaken Maryland’s current medical liability environment and jeopardize Maryland’s Total Cost of Care Model, including increasing the “cap” on damages in medical malpractice cases or diminishing immunity protections.
- Ensure that actions of the Board and its staff during the disciplinary process are transparent and that the laws governing the Board provide for accountability including the adoption of a requirement that the physician complaint form include a penalty of perjury for false allegations.

### **ADDRESS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND RECOVERY NEEDS**

- Advocate for expansion of Maryland’s crisis treatment centers throughout the State and addressing access to care barriers for behavioral health services.
- Support innovative approaches to addressing the opioid crisis, such as the establishment of a pilot supervised injection facility.
- Support the continued establishment of partnerships between police and mental health professionals to ensure the appropriate response to individuals in a behavioral health crisis.

### **STRENGTHEN PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES**

- Continue to support health equity initiatives that address health disparities and the social determinants of health.
- Support polices to increase access for all Marylanders (regardless of immigration status) to free or low-cost health care plans through initiatives that automatically enroll individuals in coverage and/or provide subsidies to improve affordability.
- Advocate for public health and safety initiatives including improving child immunization rates; developing enhanced health education programs; developing health workforce mentorship programs; prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco ensuring equitable access to public transportation; and supporting the development of evidenced-based occupational safety regulations for heat-related illness.

The complete 2023 Legislative Agenda can be found [here](#).

#### 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](http://www.medchi.org).