



The Maryland State Medical Society

News: For Immediate Release

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MARYLAND PATIENTS, PHYSICIANS, AND PUBLIC HEALTH ARE BIG WINNERS IN 2022 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

ANNAPOLIS, April 12, 2022 — MedChi is celebrating major wins on behalf of Maryland’s physicians, patients, and public health as the 2022 Maryland General Assembly session ends. Strong advocacy from MedChi resulted in a favorable outcome for the FY 2023 public health budget, including an increase in support for Medicaid and significant physician protections for two-sided incentive insurance arrangements. MedChi President Loralie Ma, MD, explained “Maryland patients, physicians and the public health of the state won big this year, and we’re excited to continue fighting for the best interests of our state’s medical community.”

First and foremost, 2022 is a tremendous budget year for physicians. Due to strong and continued MedChi advocacy, the Fiscal Year 2023 budget restores Medicaid evaluation and management reimbursement codes to 100% of Medicare. **MedChi has been advocating for the return to full parity since 2015 when the payment was reduced due to budget shortfalls.** Another budgetary priority achieved by MedChi was additional funding for the Physician Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP). Not only did the initial Fiscal Year 2023 budget contain \$1.4 million for LARP, but the amount was increased in a supplemental budget by \$3 million for a total allocation in the Fiscal Year 2023 of \$4.4 million. Again, a very successful year that will help physicians and patients.

MedChi worked with stakeholders to ensure the passage of *House Bill 1148 / Senate Bill 834: Health Insurance – Two-Sided Incentive Arrangements and Capitated Payments – Authorization*, in both chambers. This success **bears witness to the fact that Maryland has the strongest physician protections in the nation.** For the past year, MedChi has been working in concert with CareFirst, the Maryland Hospital Association, and other insurance carriers on this bill, which authorizes two-sided incentive arrangements between physicians and insurance carriers, a practice formerly prohibited in Maryland. House Bill 1148 was crafted to ensure that both physician practices and patients are not unknowingly placed in a vulnerable position. The bill recognizes both sides of the spectrum – physicians who want to enter into two-sided incentive arrangements *and* those who do not. Given the complexity of these arrangements, not every physician is well-suited to take on risk, especially smaller practices typically found in rural areas. MedChi worked hard to ensure that all physicians are protected from risk and benefit from these new arrangements.

MedChi also fought to pass legislation to extend the *Interstate Medical Licensure Compact*. The Compact extends through 2030 Maryland’s membership in the Compact

which would have otherwise expired later in 2022. The Compact allows physicians to practice in multiple member states but importantly retains the requirement that they become licensed in each state and subject to disciplinary requirements in each state.

Finally, MedChi managed to discourage legislation that could potentially harm the state's public health including a bill that would have allowed podiatrists to identify themselves as physicians and one that would have removed the two physician members from the Audiology Board.

A complete detailed report of MedChi's activities during the session and the measures we worked on can be found on www.medchi.org

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. 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.