



Virginia Dental
ASSOCIATION



October 13, 2020

Ms. Karen Kimsey
Chief Deputy Director
Department of Medical Assistance Services
600 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Ms. Kimsey,

On behalf of the association representing more than 3,800 member dentists in Virginia, we ask you to please consider providing reimbursement for PPE costs incurred by Medicaid dental providers to help ensure they are able to safely continue seeing patients – in every corner of the Commonwealth.

Dentists in Virginia provide care for our most vulnerable populations through the Medicaid program, however; we are already seeing signs of this population facing disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. A preliminary [CMS data analysis](#) found a 69 percent drop in dental services for children in the CHIP program compared with last year and warned that the “decline may have significant impacts on long-term health outcomes for children.”

On the provider side, dentists face challenges implementing new safety protocols that reduce the number of patients they can see in a day while also incurring additional expenses for necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Virginia has been allocated additional federal emergency relief for Medicaid, we urge you to please consider distributing a portion of it to help cover the increased cost in providing dental services to patients in the Medicaid program. We understand that there are many considerations for where and how you apply this funding, however; dental services provide essential healthcare and this funding will help increase access to care for vulnerable populations.

We respectfully ask for your attention to this critical issue to provide reimbursement for the cost of PPE, allowing dentists and their staff to continue safely delivering essential care for their patients.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and can be reached at 804-523-2191.

Sincerely,

Ryan Dunn
Executive Director
Virginia Dental Association

CC: Dr. Zachary Hairston, DDS, Dental Consultant, DMAS
Ms. Myra Shook, Dental Program Manager, DMAS
Mr. Daniel Plain, Director of Health Care Services, DMAS
Mr. Marvin Figueroa, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources for Governor Ralph Northam