

**2023 Maryland Academy of Family Physicians**

**Advocacy Day Priority Issues**

**Medicaid Reimbursement Rates**

* + The Maryland General Assembly in FY 2023 funded evaluation and management codes at 100% of Medicare. This makes the State a leader in ensuring that our Medicaid population has access to quality healthcare.
  + **We are asking that you maintain level funding for E&M Codes for Medicaid patients in the FY 2024 Budget.**
  + Why? Medicaid payment rates to physicians have historically been too low to ensure an adequate network for enrollees, negatively affecting access to medically necessary services. Access to care challenges lead to poor outcomes and result in an increase in the cost of care for Medicaid recipients. Appropriate payment rates not only encourage private practice physicians to participate in the Medicaid program, but also lessen the impact on employed and hospital-based physicians. Without an appropriate physician network, many enrollees often seek care in the hospital under emergency situations.
  + Please help us continue Maryland’s investment in the health of Medicaid recipients by holding funding steady.

**Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants (Physician LARP)**

* + This program provides loan assistance to physicians and physician assistants who agree to practice in underserved areas in our State.
  + In FY 2023, the General Assembly provided record funding for Physician LARP at over $4 million, almost 3 times the amount normally allocated for this important program.
  + **The Governor’s Budget for FY 2024 reduced this amount back to just over $1 million. We are asking that you restore funding to $4 million as was done in FY 2023. The need is there and the benefit is clear.**
  + Historically, LARP relied on limited funding from a single source—physician licensure fees, which generated only $400,000 per year to provide loan assistance for the entire State.
  + The average medical school debt per student is over $200,000. When medical student debt is coupled with the lower income levels found in primary care, simple economics is a major reason physicians do not choose this specialty. A much larger investment in Physician LARP is a powerful tool at the State’s disposal to ensure patient access to physicians in every part of Maryland.
  + Please help maintain the funding for Physician LARP.