

MAINTAIN MEDICAID E&M CODES AT 100% PARITY WITH MEDICARE

REQUEST:

Maintain evaluation and management (E&M) code payment rates at 100% parity with Medicare for Fiscal Year 2024.

BACKGROUND:

During the 2022 Session, MedChi successfully advocated to fully restore E&M code payment rates to 100% parity with Medicare for Fiscal Year 2023. The last time E&M code payment rates fully aligned with Medicare was in 2012 when the Affordable Care Act (ACA) passed, and more people enrolled in the Medicaid program. The 2012 fully funded rate was seen as a success because it resulted in greater participation in Medicaid by health care practitioners, which helped meet the increased demand for services caused by the ACA. Therefore, no changes were made to the rate in 2013 and 2014. However, in 2015, despite the success in increasing practitioner participation and greater access to care, rates were reduced to 87% of Medicare. Subsequently, the Hogan Administration restored rates to 94% of Medicare in 2016 and maintained the 94% rate through Fiscal Year 2022 until it fully restored the rate to 100% parity with Medicare for Fiscal Year 2023.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in greater Medicaid enrollment, creating an increase in those seeking care and an increased need to maintain strong practitioner networks. Considering the impact on communities affected by lack of access to health care services as well as socioeconomic inequities and health disparities, the need to ensure robust Medicaid practitioner networks is inescapable. Access to proper health care is a key means of addressing these inequities. Furthermore, medical practices have been economically impacted by the pandemic. Workforce availability, coupled with the costs associated with managing and maintaining the financial viability of a business, influences which payers they contract with, including participation with Medicaid. Maintaining Medicare parity for E&M codes will support the ongoing financial viability of those practices and enable them to continue to contract with Medicaid to ensure access to health care services for Maryland's most disadvantaged patients.

WHAT TO DO:

- Call/e-mail your district legislator(s) and members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee and request that they support maintaining E&M code payment rates at 100% parity with Medicare.
- To email your district legislator(s), go to [Members - Find My Representatives \(maryland.gov\)](https://www.maryland.gov/members).
- For contact information for members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, contact Chip O'Neil at coneil@medchi.org.