

**Report to the NYSDA Board of Trustees
Council on Dental Benefit Programs
Review of A.6058 – “New York Health Act”
December 10, 2021
Submitted by Dr. Alyson Buchalter, Chair**

The Council on Dental Benefit Programs has reviewed Assembly bill number A.6058, introduced by Assemblyman Gottfried. The “New York Health Act”, as it is more commonly called, would create a single payer health plan with the goal of providing health coverage for all New Yorkers.

After reviewing A.6058 and the research report published by the Rand Corporation, the Council expressed the following concerns.

- **Program funding and administration:** The Council does not believe that the funding mechanism proposed - a progressively graduated tax - would be reliable and believe it would not be well funded in the long term. Lower income taxpayers may initially pay less for health care although others will end up paying more. High earners could find ways of avoiding the tax. In addition, mandatory payroll taxes could potentially hurt small employers and may be a driving force for these businesses to practice in another state or go out of business entirely. The Council noted that both Vermont and Massachusetts tried some form of a single payer health program, with dismal results.

The Council is not confident that state government would be able to administer the program efficiently or fairly for health care providers. They pointed to the state’s current Medicaid program as an example.

- **Quality of care:** The Council expressed concerns about how this system could affect the ability of dentists to provide the best quality of care for patients. As with other subsidized programs, there is potential to limit treatment options to the lowest cost choice rather than the optimal treatment for the patient.
- **Provider reimbursement and access to care:** The Council has concerns with the methodology for provider reimbursement such as capitation or rates based on Medicare and/or Medicaid. Low reimbursement rates would be especially difficult for newly practicing dentists who are faced with high student loan debt. There is the possibility of both new and established practicing dentists to move out of state or retire from practice. This would ultimately have an effect on access to care. In addition, the Council believes that dentistry will take a back seat to medicine in determining reimbursement rates for providers.

Massachusetts enacted its own healthcare reform 10 years ago, but an increase in improved access to care and affordability faded over time.

Although a few members were in favor of the concept of a single payer health system, they were not in favor of this particular program.

For all of the above stated reason, the Council on Dental Benefit Programs is in opposition to A.6058 and does not support a single payer health plan in New York at this time.