



Dentists to Massachusetts: We Always Work to Improve Your Oral Health

**EVERYBODY IN MASSACHUSETTS DESERVES THE HIGHEST QUALITY DENTAL CARE.
BAY STATE RESIDENTS SHOULD NEVER SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS.**

That's why the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) always fights for laws and regulations that deliver the safest, most effective oral health care found anywhere in the United States.

This year, we're pushing for a comprehensive new law that will improve access to high quality oral health care for underserved populations such as elderly and low-income residents. Our bill offers everything from more preventive care to increased awareness about the benefits of fluoridated water to improved integration of dental hygiene within MassHealth and mandatory dental screenings of children prior to entering kindergarten.

Our latest bill is a "Made in Massachusetts" effort, with the MDS stepping up to deliver a new class of "mid-level" dental practitioner who can service communities designated as "dental practice shortage areas." We are calling for mid-level dental practitioners licensed with the **highest possible level of education, training, and appropriate safeguards** such as direct supervision by a licensed dentist. These common sense precautions would mandate the same level of education, training, and supervision for the new class of dental professionals that's required of nurse practitioners and physician assistants in health care.

Massachusetts residents understand the importance of quality oral health care. Earlier this year, a statewide poll revealed that three out of four registered voters were uncomfortable with a proposal to allow mid-level dental practitioners to treat patients—including performing irreversible procedures like drilling and extracting teeth—without direct supervision by a licensed dentist. After all, a new mid-level dental provider will be charged with caring for underserved residents who are far more likely to have complex oral health problems than the average person in the Bay State.

For more than 150 years, the MDS has worked to deliver laws that benefit you and your loved ones. We've backed licensing for public health dental hygienists, opioid prescription limits, improved dental benefits for consumers, MassHealth coverage for low-income residents, increased awareness about the negative effects of tobacco and sugar-sweetened beverages, and much more.

Bay State dentists care about excellent oral health care for all, and will continue to work with lawmakers and key stakeholders to fight for high quality care that is safe, accessible, and trustworthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David P. Lustbader DMD'.

David P. Lustbader, DMD
President, Massachusetts Dental Society



To learn more and take action on oral health in Massachusetts visit massdental.org/midlevel-providers