We look forward to working with the Missouri Legislature on the following legislation for the benefit of our members and Missouri citizens to whom they provide care.

2021 MDA Supported Legislation

**Downcoding**  
[SB 401](https://www.mldo.org) sponsored by Sen. Bob Onder (R-St. Charles)  
[HB 1337](https://www.mldo.org) sponsored by Rep. Suzie Pollock (R-Lebanon)

- Downcoding describes a growing phenomenon, in which an insurance carrier modifies the procedure code originally submitted by the healthcare provider and reimburses the amount attributed to the new code in lieu of the originally billed code.
- In a 2020 MDA membership survey, 94% of dentists said they experience downcoding, with 100% of those stating it results in lower payment.
- Unfortunately, this practice is not limited to dentists and affects other healthcare providers, too. A recent analysis done by other large medical practices found up to 68% of their claims submitted to Missouri’s Medicaid MCOs—the state’s three largest health insurance carriers—were categorized by the insurers as “fraudulent”, resulting in the submitted code being changed to a code with a lower reimbursable rate or from a covered to a non-covered service code. When this occurs, the healthcare provider is forced to write off the difference and absorb the loss.
- The MDA is eager to work with other health care provider groups and associations across the state to address this growing problem.

**Credentialing**  
[HB 1002](https://www.mldo.org) sponsored by Rep. Wayne Wallingford (R-Cape Girardeau)  
[SB 484](https://www.mldo.org) sponsored by Sen. Elaine Gannon (R-DeSoto)

- In 2020 the Missouri General Assembly passed House Bill 1682 to enforce prompt credentialing for healthcare providers. Most important, it requires a health insurance carrier’s credentialing decision to be issued within 60 days of receiving an application and prohibits a carrier from requiring a practitioner to be credentialed if the practitioner is working on behalf of a credentialed provider who is on FMLA leave.
- A Missouri dental insurance carrier has not adhered to the new law, citing exemption based on tax status. We believe regardless of the type of corporation, an insurer of health benefits should be required to abide by this law.

2021 MDA Supported Budgetary Items

The MDA is extremely appreciative of the 2020 Missouri Legislature including funding for limited adult dental services, provider reimbursement rate increases and other dental programs. We appreciate consideration of funding continuation for these areas:

- **Dental Medicaid Continuation** – Approximately $5 Million to maintain provider reimbursement rates and current funding for Adult Dental Services.
- **Continued funding for the following dental programs** – Dental Lifeline Network/Donated Dental Services ($90,000); Elks Mobile Dental ($200,000); and, State Dental Director ($70,000).