The Massachusetts Medical Society is a professional association of over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The Medical Society is committed to advocating on behalf of patients, to give them a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them provide the best care possible.

The MMS recognizes oral health is an integral part of health and wellness. The ability to access oral health care is out of reach for many and is associated with gender, age, education level, income, race and ethnicity, access to medical insurance, and geographic location. Addressing these determinants is key in reducing health disparities and improving overall health. Endeavors are essential to overcome obstacles accessing care. Oral health care is a health equity issue. “Non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians and Alaska Natives generally have the poorest oral health of any racial and ethnic groups in the United States.” “Avoidance of routine dental care due to lack of coverage, access, and/or affordability can have long-term health consequences, both mental and physical.”

House bill 2320/Senate bill 1378 establishes a special commission to conduct an oral health needs assessment and provide recommendations. The commission would conduct a state-wide assessment to investigate the oral health needs of both adult and pediatric residents and assess gaps in access to oral health care and services across diverse groups. towards health equity. It has been over 20 years since such an assessment was conducted. It is for these reasons that we ask the Joint Committee on Public Health to report H. 2320/S. 1378 out favorably.

2 Disparities in Oral Health » Massachusetts Coalition for Oral Health (masscoalitionfororalhealth.org)