



**State of Maine | 131st Legislature**  
**Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services**  
**Testimony of Dr. Israel Adeloye on behalf of Penobscot Community Health Care**

**April 30, 2025**

**In support of:**

*LD 1615, An Act to Expand Access to Oral Health Care by Creating  
a New Path for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry*

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of LD 1615 An Act to Expand Access to Oral Health Care. I am Dr. Israel Adeloye, Dental Clinical Director at Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC).

Founded in 1997, PCHC is a non-profit Federally Qualified Health Center renowned for its comprehensive dental services. Our Dental Center boasts 43 operatories and offers a wide spectrum of care including basic restorations, extractions, endodontics, routine hygiene, orthodontics, and walk-in services. Over the past year alone, PCHC Dental Center has provided critical care to 4,633 individuals through 18,552 encounters.

Today, I am speaking to you as a licensed general dentist in Maine and as the Clinical Dental Director at PCHC. I have been practicing general dentistry here for over ten years, mostly in public health settings.

I can tell you without a doubt — Maine, especially rural Maine, does not have enough dentists. Many of our health centers serve a large number of patients on MaineCare as well as those with private insurance. Centers like PCHC are critical to providing care for both of these communities. But hiring new dentists has become very difficult, and we need better ways to attract and keep dental professionals in Maine. PCHC serves a high-need population, and **demand for dental care has far outpaced our provider availability.**

We have not been accepting new patients on a regular basis for at least three years. The last time we were fully open to new patient intake was in 2019. Since then, we have occasionally opened limited panels—typically for 20 to 50 patients—which have filled within a single day.



Penobscot Community  
Health Care

Just in the past year, PCHC has attempted to hire two qualified dentists trained outside the U.S. Even though they passed all the same exams U.S.-trained dentists take — and even completed residency programs at accredited U.S. dental schools — they were still denied licenses. They are both now practicing in other states. For example, Massachusetts, which is experiencing less of a dentist shortage crisis than in Maine, allows these dentists trained outside the U.S. to practice with limited licenses.

Those testifying in opposition to this bill have a legitimate desire to protect the quality of services provided by dentists in Maine. The Adex and National Board exams exists in this profession to do just that. These exams which are still required in the proposed pathway, are in place to affirm proper clinical skills and knowledge for standard of care. This bill ensures we maintain quality and oversight by also requiring adjunct dentists to practice only under the general supervision of a licensed Maine dentist, within board-approved settings, and under a written practice agreement that clearly outlines permitted procedures, safety protocols, and quality assurance measures.

This pathway ensures that these dental professionals will be overseen by already licensed, reputable dentists in Maine who are willing, after interviewing, credentialing, and overseeing these dentists, to put their licenses on the line as formal supervisors of these individuals to ensure they deliver quality care to Maine people.

This plan would allow us to care for more patients while keeping high standards through regular peer reviews, which are already standard in health centers.

Thank you for considering this bill. I urge you to support LD 1615 so every Mainer can get the dental care they deserve.

Sincerely,

Dr. Israel Adeloye, DMD, MPH  
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