

[(3)](4) "Provider of dental care" means any person who is licensed by law to provide dental care to individuals.

(b) For purposes of this section, a dental review committee is:

(1) A regulatory board or agency established by State or federal law to license, certify, or discipline any provider of dental care;

(2) A committee of the Maryland State Dental Association, the Maryland Dental Society or any of their component societies, or a committee of any other professional society or association composed of providers of dental care;

(3) A committee of the medical staff or other committee of a hospital or related institution, if the governing board of the hospital or related institution forms and approves the committee or approves the written bylaws under which the committee operates;

(4) Any person, including a professional standard review organization, who contracts with an agency of this State or of the federal government to perform any of the functions listed in subsection (c) of this section; or

(5) Any person who contracts with a provider of dental care to perform any of those functions listed in subsection (c) of this section that are limited to the review of services provided by the provider of dental care.

(c) For purposes of this section, a dental review committee:

(1) Evaluates and seeks to improve the quality of dental care provided by providers of dental care;

(2) Evaluates the need for and the level of performance of dental care provided by providers of dental care;

(3) Evaluates the qualifications, competence, and performance of providers of dental care;

(4) Evaluates and acts on matters that relate to the discipline of any provider of dental care; or

(5) Evaluates and provides assistance to any provider of dental care in need of treatment and rehabilitation for alcoholism, drug abuse, chemical dependency, or other physical, emotional, or mental condition.

(d) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the proceedings, records, and files of a dental review committee are not discoverable and are not admissible in evidence in any civil action arising out of matters that are being reviewed and evaluated by the dental review committee.

(e) Subsection (d) of this section does not apply to:

(1) A civil action brought by a party to the proceedings of the dental review committee who claims to be aggrieved by the decision of the dental review committee; or